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Letter dated 20 March 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to send you the report of the Workshop for Newly Elected and Present Security Council Members, which was held on 15 and 16 November 2007 at Tarrytown House (see annex). The final report has been compiled in accordance with Chatham House Rules under the sole responsibility of the Permanent Mission of Finland.

On the basis of the very positive feedback we have received each year from the participants, the Government of Finland remains committed to sponsoring the workshop as an annual event. The Government of Finland expresses the hope that this report will not only assist in familiarizing newly elected members with the working methods and procedures of the Council, but also contribute to a better understanding among the wider United Nations membership of the complexity of the work of the Council.

I should be grateful, accordingly, if this report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Heidi Schroderus-Fox
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 20 March 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

"Hitting the Ground Running": Fifth Annual Workshop for the Newly Elected Members of the Security Council

15 and 16 November 2007
Tarrytown Conference Center
Tarrytown, New York

The Government of Finland — in cooperation with the Center on International Organization of Columbia University, the Security Council Affairs Division of the United Nations Secretariat, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) — convened the fifth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council on 15 and 16 November 2007.

The annual workshops have served to help familiarize the newly elected members with the practice, procedure and working methods of the Council so that they are in a position to "hit the ground running" when they join the Council the following January. The series has also provided current members of the Council with an opportunity to reflect on their work in an informal setting. The workshops have been designed to complement the annual UNITAR briefings on aspects of the Council's work.

This year, the opening evening featured remarks by Ibrahim Gambari, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the International Compact with Iraq and Other Issues, and Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

The full-day programme on 16 November included four roundtable sessions that focused on the following themes:

I. State of the Council 2007: taking stock and looking ahead

II. Working methods

III. Security Council committees and working groups

IV. Lessons learned: reflections by the class of 2007

Opening dinner keynote addresses and discussion

Ibrahim Gambari, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the International Compact with Iraq and Other Issues, delivered the first of two keynote addresses during the opening dinner of the retreat. Drawing from his own experience as Permanent Representative of a member of the Security Council between 1994 and 1995, he offered advice to the incoming Council members, and presented observations on the respective roles of the Security Council and the good offices of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Gambari recommended that all incoming members of the Security Council make use of the Secretariat as a source of timely and reliable information, and encouraged them to meet frequently with Secretariat officials on issues of concern. He underlined that the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of

Political Affairs constituted a particularly valuable resource at the disposal of the Security Council and its members.

According to Mr. Gambari, incoming Security Council members should focus their resources and attention on a few specific issues on the Council's agenda, particularly those closest to the region of the Council member. All Council members will respect and appreciate the expertise of each member on issues close to its region, allowing non-permanent members to play an important role in the Council's policymaking process.

Mr. Gambari stressed the need for the permanent missions of Council members to keep their own Government informed at all times. When they fail to explain all stakes and positions, they incur the risk that another Council member might contact their own Government before they do, and that the latter might convince the Government to revise its instructions to the permanent mission.

Finally, Mr. Gambari recommended that incoming Security Council members work closely with the permanent members of the Security Council and with other States, especially their own constituencies in the broader United Nations membership. Ongoing contacts between Security Council members and the broader United Nations membership ensure that the decisions of the Security Council have the full buy-in of the membership at large, which improves the prospects for their effective implementation.

In the second part of his address, Mr. Gambari laid out his observations on the relationship between the Security Council and the Secretary-General's good offices. He listed six elements of critical importance for the success of the Secretary-General's representatives: (i) the Secretary-General's envoy has to evaluate the positions of the parties constantly; (ii) he has to earn, nurture and preserve the parties' trust and confidence in his work; (iii) the envoy has to be impartial; (iv) he needs to have carrots and sticks available to him, especially in dealing with spoilers; (v) the envoy has to have the full confidence of the Security Council; and (vi) he requires the strong support by the Security Council. When the Security Council cannot reach agreement, it may choose to grant considerable freedom of action to the Secretary-General's envoy, while paying close attention to each of his or her steps. Irrespective of how divided the Council is on the issue on its agenda, it is crucial that the Council lends its support to the Secretary-General's envoy and that it publicly and regularly displays such support.

Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, opened his remarks by offering his perspective on the evolution of United Nations peacekeeping. He noted that peacekeeping is the creation of the Security Council, particularly its elected members. Mr. Guéhenno observed that at the time of the Suez Crisis when the five permanent members were in disagreement — with the United Kingdom and France opposing the other permanent members — peacekeeping was the solution created by the elected members of the Council. He noted that peacekeeping has developed into something much different than what was envisaged at the time of the Suez Crisis. He observed that today peacekeeping has a more multidimensional character, frequently including security sector reform and the integration of humanitarian and development responses.

According to Mr. Guéhenno, hard lessons about peacekeeping were learned as a result of difficult missions in the 1990s in Rwanda, Somalia and the former

Yugoslavia. Mr. Guéhenno suggested that United Nations peacekeeping has recovered in recent years as a result of intensive analysis of the failures of this era, as shown, for instance, by the reports on Srebrenica (A/54/549) and Rwanda (S/1999/1257), as well as the Brahimi report (S/2000/809-A/55/305). However, Mr. Guéhenno suggested that there is a risk of forgetting some of the hard lessons learned in the 1990s. In this regard, he posed five fundamental questions for the Security Council regarding the viability of United Nations peacekeeping missions:

- *Is there a peace to keep and does the consent of the parties exist?* Mr. Guéhenno suggested that many grey areas exist in peacekeeping when there is a weak agreement between the parties and there are spoilers on the ground. Mr. Guéhenno suggested that in such cases the decision of whether or not there is a peace to keep is a judgement call that makes the Council's work especially challenging.
- *Is peacekeeping suitable when stronger action is needed?* Mr. Guéhenno cautioned that peacekeeping will lead to failure when the key parties in a conflict are not committed to peace. This is why, in his opinion, the Council must sometimes explore other options, such as mandating coalitions of the willing, as it has done in Timor-Leste and in Afghanistan.
- *Is the Security Council unified?* Mr. Guéhenno stated that it is essential to have the unity of the Council not just in words but in substance, if peacekeeping is to succeed. He noted that the troops and the military hardware that are deployed in a peacekeeping mission merely create the space for a political process. Mr. Guéhenno also suggested that in circumstances where the permanent members are divided, the elected members can often help to create a better sense of balance, common purpose and unity in the Council.
- *Will the necessary resources be there to fulfil the mandate?* Mr. Guéhenno expressed concern that a lack of adequate resources can lead to failure in peacekeeping missions. He suggested that in peacekeeping one success is easily forgotten or unnoticed, while one big failure is enough to destroy the progress of several years.
- *What is the partnership like today between the United Nations and other organizations?* Mr. Guéhenno suggested that in collaborating with each other, the United Nations and regional organizations have to keep in mind their respective comparative advantages and expectations. He also expressed concern that the notion of "subsidiarity" could become an excuse for the United Nations to disengage from regions where some external help may be needed.

Mr. Guéhenno suggested that peacekeeping is the most visible and risky part of United Nations activity. He further observed that consistent attention by the Security Council to peacekeeping missions is fundamental, as the adoption of a resolution mandating a peacekeeping operation marks the beginning — rather than the end — of the Council's work on an issue. In addition to peacekeeping missions, he also observed that other matters — including strategies for dealing with issues such as Iran, Iraq and the Israel-Palestinian crisis — contribute to the heavy workload of the Security Council. Mr. Guéhenno suggested that new Council members do their best to manage this workload by striving for political unity,

exerting political will, and, in general, considering the five questions posed during his talk.

In the ensuing discussion, participants discussed the relationship between the good offices role of the Secretary-General and the Security Council. One speaker observed that the Security Council had to be careful not to encroach on the activities of envoys of the Secretary-General and raised the situation in Myanmar as a case in point. This speaker emphasized that "unnecessary interference" from the Council could undermine progress made through the good offices mechanism, which should be perceived as confidential and independent. While sympathetic to this point of view, one of the presenters suggested that the primary responsibility of the Security Council is to maintain international peace and security, and, as such, it should have a role to play in supporting the good offices of the Secretary-General during crisis situations such as the one in Myanmar. However, this presenter also cautioned that the Council had to be perceived as fair and objective in order to enhance its credibility and effectiveness in supporting the good offices of the Secretary-General. He observed that this is why the reform of the Security Council is so important and suggested that the elected members work together to exert their influence in order to ensure that the Council is not dominated by the permanent members.

One speaker asked about the potential consequences of failure of the planned African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). One of the presenters responded that such a failure could lead to the deterioration of the situation in the rest of the Sudan. In particular, he noted that it could jeopardize the next steps in the implementation of the North-South agreement, which could result in local conflicts in other parts of the country, including Kordofan, northern Sudan, and perhaps eastern Sudan. It was observed that while Sudan is still a strong State, such conflicts could lead to the fragmentation of the country and create a political vacuum that might be filled by non-State actors. The presenter also suggested that if UNAMID did not succeed, then collaborations between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping operations might be discredited, narrowing future options and prospects for successful peacekeeping.

Session I
State of the Council 2007: taking stock and looking ahead

Moderator:

Ambassador Vitaly I. Churkin
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

Commentators:

Ambassador Dumisani S. Kumalo
Permanent Representative of South Africa

Ambassador John Sawers
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

At this session, participants were encouraged to discuss trends in the work of the Security Council, including issues related to the Council's agenda and workload; the Council's accomplishments and innovations over the past year; the strengths and

weaknesses in the Council's performance, including the role of the Groups of Friends; perceptions of legitimacy and encroachment; and the challenges ahead.

Key features and trends in the Security Council work: agenda, workload, perceptions of legitimacy and encroachment

One speaker stated that his delegation, in its work in the Security Council, had been guided by the principle that the Council acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations in carrying out its responsibilities, as enshrined in Article 24 (1) of the United Nations Charter. Therefore, during its Council tenure, his delegation had sought to determine whether the Council's decisions would benefit all Member States, and whether those decisions would "make the world a better place" in terms of responding to threats to international peace and security. He was of the view that the Council could claim success in some cases, but not in others. The speaker said that the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone would likely agree that over the past years the Council had performed well on behalf of their interests and supported them in their hour of greatest need. However, the people of Western Sahara and Palestine would likely have a different opinion of the Council's work with their respective populations, while the people of Somalia would be even more disappointed by the Council's performance in their country.

The same speaker suggested that the Council's objectivity was at times influenced by the quality of information presented to it. He acknowledged that some reports of the Secretary-General were beneficial to the Council's work. Still, other reports of the Secretary-General, such as those on Lebanon (the last report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) being a "case in point"), were not very helpful. These reports appeared to emphasize particular issues that could "elicit certain responses from some Council members". He contended that the Council allocated too much time to Lebanon. Another speaker responded that the reports of the Secretary-General on Lebanon actually "contributed quite a bit" to the Council's work, noting in this regard that perceptions of "subjectivity and objectivity" varied from member to member. It was also suggested by one speaker that it might be helpful for the reports of the Secretary-General to incorporate the perspectives not just of the primarily affected country, but also of other countries in the region.

Taking up the issue once more, the initial speaker on this subject pointed to the reports of the Secretary-General on the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire. Such reports, he said, and others coming from countries where United Nations staff members were on the ground, proved to be "good intelligence" for the Council. On the other hand, in reports such as those on Lebanon, the drafters often referred simply to third-party reports or to information that they had "received" from an unspecified source, while at the same time avoiding saying anything about Israel. This approach to preparing reports was not satisfactory, he emphasized.

With reference to the Council's efforts to maintain international peace and security, one participant proposed periodic "retreats" where members could have "strategic debates" on a number of issues before the Council. According to the same speaker, such retreats could take place every three or six months, allowing Council members to consider certain issues more holistically and without confining them to the "narrow constructions" of the Council agenda. In this connection, he pointed to the Council's consideration of the Sudan and the Middle East, issues that he

believed could be discussed more comprehensively at retreats in terms of their impacts on the respective regions. He also cited the situation in Lebanon, which he noted was related to the Iranian and Syrian issues.

Another speaker agreed that regular retreats by members — as opposed to only "formulaic discussions" of Council agenda items — could benefit the work of the Council. Specifically, he believed that the impact of the Council's imposition of economic measures under Chapter VII of the Charter could benefit from such discussions. Another participant supported the suggestion of retreats where members could take a more "holistic" approach to some issues, though emphasizing that whatever was discussed at such gatherings should also be "injected" into the work of the Council proper. By contrast, another discussant believed that retreats were unnecessary and that nothing prevented the Council from having discussions "in a larger context" in the regular course of its conduct of work. In addition, noted this speaker, retreats for comprehensive discussions were not always possible. Nevertheless, such work was in fact ongoing among members whether it was by telephone, at the respective Council missions, or on the margins of proceedings in the Chamber and in the consultations room.

The initial speaker on this subject reiterated that the idea of regular retreats was a proposal only, while re-emphasizing that many issues on the Council's agenda could benefit from such discussions. Citing the Eritrea/Ethiopia and Somalia items in this regard, he strongly underscored the link between these issues. At the same time, he hastened to note that he was not suggesting that there be outcomes to such retreats nor was he proposing that the Council adopt a resolution that would comprehensively address those issues. He then referred to the importance of the non-proliferation item, asking whether, in that regard, the Council had at any time discussed the links among Iranian, Israeli, Lebanese and Syrian issues.

Turning to the Sudan as another case in point, this speaker noted the links of that item to the situations in Chad and the Central African Republic. He pointed out that in the lead-up to establishing UNAMID, the Council had insisted that the Government of the Sudan accept the deployment of the peacekeeping operation as well as cooperate with UNAMID. In addition, the Council had also called on the Government to cooperate with the Darfur rebel groups. On the other hand, and in connection with MINURCAT (United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, established by resolution 1778 (2007)), the Council did not insist that the Government of Chad engage in talks with Chadian rebel groups. While such "double standards" were perhaps not apparent to Council members in New York, they were evident and did matter to those in the region. Responding to this point, one speaker noted that the Government of the Sudan had created the conditions by which approximately 200,000 people had been killed and in excess of two million others displaced. The Council had taken the measures it had against the Government of the Sudan since it must be held accountable for its actions. Citing the Council's failures with the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, he warned that if there were to be a "genocide in 2008", the Council would have again failed.

With respect to emerging trends in the Council, one participant observed that there were a limited number of "tools" with which to exercise the Council's mandate, noting in this regard (1) verbal diplomacy, (2) operational activities (peacekeeping and special political missions), (3) economic measures, (4) the threat of the use of force, and (5) the authorization of the use of force. He pointed to the

need for the Council to identify issues, countries or regions that could pose threats to international peace and security early on, specifically through having discussions that could recognize such threats before they materialize. The Council, he believed, could create the capacity to identify threats six months or even two years in advance. In this regard, he pointed to the April 2007 Council high-level debate on climate change, which had addressed that issue in the context of it being a threat to international peace and security. He also commended the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Bali (to be held in December 2007) for addressing the issue. When considering the views of islands and low-lying States that climate change posed a threat to their security, he continued, there was indeed a contribution for the Council to make in terms of its mandate under the Charter. Another speaker was in favour of the Council developing capacities to anticipate crises, but cautioned that this should not be done at the expense of overcrowding and overshadowing more pressing matters on the Council's agenda. Developing such capacities could place a heavy burden on Council members, notably elected members with scarce resources. It was also suggested that there was a danger that some Council members could exploit the media to focus attention on climate change and other matters that play well with domestic audiences instead of giving sufficient attention to more pressing issues.

Referring to the huge increase in the Council's workload, another discussant noted that, when the Charter was drafted over 60 years ago, threats to international peace and security were generally viewed as conflicts between States. However, threats to international peace and security more recently have also emanated from acts of terrorism, intra-State conflicts and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The speaker thus queried whether threats to international peace and security were now broader than before and whether the Council needed to place a limit on what constituted such threats for the purpose of its work. In this context, he observed that, while climate change and poverty were not direct threats to international peace and security, those issues did have such implications.

Also characterizing the Council's workload as heavy, another participant drew attention to the latest resolution adopted on the Sudan which, inter alia, had requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on its implementation on a monthly basis. In his view, the purpose of such monthly reporting remained unclear and, at the same time, it had unnecessarily increased the Council's workload.

One speaker questioned whether the Council had simply become more active without becoming more effective. Comparing the Council's work and impact in 2007, he observed a high level of non-compliance with Council decisions. There was also a "General Assemblyization" of the Council, he said, with a lot of time being misspent in consultations that could be used more productively. He believed that Council members, in consultations, should not only present the views of their capitals but also actually determine the course of action that the Council should take.

According to one speaker, there were issues that did threaten international peace and security but that the Council did not want to "deal with vigorously". This tendency had negatively affected the Council's credibility and even its legitimacy. The speaker held that if the Council wanted the international community to continue "believing" in its role and assisting in the implementation of its decisions, then the Council must be more attentive to such issues. In this respect, the speaker advised

the Council to consult more with regional organizations and to listen carefully to their positions. In one participant's view, there was a danger of the Council encroaching on the mandates of other United Nations organs when it took up certain issues. According to another speaker, as the General Assembly was not as "effective or authoritative" as the Council, the onus was put on the latter to address such issues.

The role of Groups of Friends

One speaker suggested that Groups of Friends were frequently politically biased. Citing the practice of such Groups of "developing" Council draft resolutions, he believed that should the Council continue to use such Groups, their membership should at least reflect what he referred to as a "diversity of opinion". He likened the Groups of Friends to being "Groups of likeminded people". Reliance on such "outside mechanisms", he continued, should not be allowed to encroach on the Council's work. Another speaker, while noting that Groups of Friends were at times helpful, concurred that they were sometimes politicized. Specifically, he noted that, with respect to the Council's agenda item regarding the situation in Georgia, a number of efforts had been made to facilitate a meeting of Abkhaz representatives with members of the Council so that the views of the latter could be taken into account. Stressing that Abkhazia was an "internationally recognized" party to that conflict, the speaker pointed out that such unsuccessful efforts had included attempts to convene "Arria-formula" meetings, which, in his view, could be arranged by any Council member.

Still, several participants spoke in favour of the Groups of Friends. One speaker stated that it was a "fact of life" that those Groups existed, adding that they had a legitimate role to play since some issues that were on the Council's agenda were also discussed within structures outside of the Council. However, he did caution that whereas the Groups of Friends in many ways laid the groundwork for much of the Council's work, their respective opinions could not override what the Council wished to discuss vis-à-vis a given item. Another participant noted an understanding that the Groups of Friends were supposed to facilitate the Council's work and not substitute for it. While there may sometimes be indirect political pressure on Groups of Friends, Council members should not use their criticisms of these Groups as an excuse for inaction. It was observed that all Council members should take the responsibility of making persuasive arguments to support their views and exert influence on the Council's decisions. Therefore, draft resolutions submitted by the Groups should not be taken on without discussion within the Council or be considered as completed drafts. It was also observed that the Council should pay closer attention not only to the countries concerned with a particular agenda item, but also to other affected countries in a given region. Given that it may sometimes not be possible for leaders to travel to New York to meet with the Council, one speaker suggested that the Council take more advantage of teleconferencing technology. In addition, another speaker noted that the Group of Friends of security sector reform served to bring into the work of the Council the views of the wider United Nations membership on that issue. In this way, the Council could be more responsive to the wider membership, he said.

Challenges ahead

On the challenges ahead, one speaker drew attention to the situation in Myanmar, where the Council was facing a situation of "grievous disrespect" for human rights and where the ruling military junta was "ensuring" that the country did not enjoy the economic prosperity that was being experienced by most Asian countries. In his view, the Council might have "missed an opportunity" in early 2007 with respect to Myanmar. If that opportunity had not been missed, he said, the Council could have perhaps prevented the repression there later in the year. After the recent demonstrations in Myanmar, and the Government's repressive reaction to those demonstrations, the Council "did get its act together" and had given a boost to the good offices mission of the Secretary-General. In his view, the Council's actions had strengthened the hand of Ibrahim Gambari, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the International Compact with Iraq and Other Issues. The speaker noted that the Government of Myanmar was now responding to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Council. In this respect, he queried how the Council could maintain a level of pressure on Myanmar to encourage the authorities to take further positive steps while, at the same time, not applying the pressure in a way that would "tip them over" into possibly refusing the good offices mission of the Secretary-General. Another speaker cautioned that, if a Council resolution had been adopted in early 2007, "who knows what would have happened". He added that the item had been "bulldozed" through the Council with a procedural vote to place it on the agenda, which was not a good approach for the Council. Subsequently, though, the Council managed to be more effective in its actions vis-à-vis Myanmar, because it was more inclusive and consensus driven, which was a good lesson for all Council members.

In terms of other challenges ahead, one speaker also drew attention to the Sudan, which he characterized as a "reputational" issue for the United Nations. With success in Darfur, the reputation and effectiveness of the United Nations would be enhanced. On the other hand, should there be a failure in Darfur, the organization's reputation — especially that of United Nations peacekeeping — would "very much suffer". Further, he underscored the need to balance the Council's pressure and coercive measures on the Sudan in light of the Council's four "strands of activity" vis-à-vis Darfur. These strands included deploying an effective peacekeeping force in Darfur; improving the regional security situation; boosting the political process jointly undertaken by Jan Eliasson (Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur) and Salim Ahmed Salim (African Union Special Envoy for Darfur); and the judicial tract, where the International Criminal Court was mandated by the Security Council to undertake investigations. On the last point, the speaker added that, unfortunately, the Government of the Sudan's cooperation with the Court was lacking.

The same speaker perceived the issue of Iran to be the "toughest of all" challenges ahead, especially given its nuclear activities but also in light of that country's activities in Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iraq and in the broader region. While uncertain whether Iran was pursuing nuclear weapons, or just a capacity to build those weapons, he stressed the need not to be naïve and to accept that Iran was pursuing such activities solely for energy purposes. He also warned that a situation must be avoided wherein Iran made sufficient progress in its nuclear activities to pose a threat to its neighbours and the region, especially Israel. He cautioned that such progress would create a climate for military confrontation in an already tense

region. A situation wherein Iran possessed nuclear weapons would also "blow a hole" in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons so that the Treaty would "probably sink totally". Acknowledging the role of the permanent members plus Germany in negotiating draft resolutions on this Council agenda item, he underlined that there actually had been cooperation on the issue among Council members. By contrast, on this point, another speaker remarked that it was "ludicrous" for the permanent members plus Germany to prepare the draft resolutions on Iran without involving the elected members, as this issue was of importance to all delegations in the Council. Similarly, one discussant lamented instances in which the permanent members had negotiated draft resolutions to which the media had had access before these texts were given to the elected members of the Council.

Session II
Working methods

Moderator:

Ambassador Ricardo Alberto Arias
Permanent Representative of Panama

Commentators:

Ambassador Liu Zhenmin
Deputy Permanent Representative of China

Ambassador Marcello Spatafora
Permanent Representative of Italy

The session addressed several aspects of Security Council working methods: (i) responsibilities of the President; (ii) Security Council missions; (iii) conduct of business of the Security Council; (iv) cooperation with other United Nations organs and bodies; and (v) broadening inputs and outreach.

In introducing the topic, the moderator observed that, in recent years, the responsibilities of the Security Council had changed dramatically, with conflicts becoming more complicated due to the close linkages among security, human rights and development. Expressing concern about the long-standing provisional status of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, he noted that "form should follow function". One of the commentators concurred that the Security Council had been playing a more complex role in the maintenance of international peace and security. He emphasized, however, that the core question was whether the Council had become not only more active, but also more effective, in its action. He expressed his doubts in this regard. Another commentator, although acknowledging that the Council had worked unsparingly to improve its working methods, pointed out that working methods were a technical matter with "great implications" for the effectiveness and credibility of the Council itself.

In the ensuing discussion, considerable attention was devoted to identifying ways to enhance the Council's transparency, accessibility and efficiency. Still, some participants contended that, in order to achieve results, the discussion should focus on practical issues that could be realistically improved instead of advocating unrealistic changes related to general diplomatic practice. In this regard, according

to one speaker, the Security Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions should be the appropriate forum to address all issues related to the Council's working methods and conduct of business. The same speaker also suggested holding a meeting of the Informal Working Group at the ambassadorial level in order to deal with matters that could not be properly addressed at the experts' level.

A number of participants emphasized the need for newly elected members to quickly familiarize themselves with the working methods of the Council. To this end, the usefulness of the following documents was underscored: the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2006/507); the unofficial handbook on the working methods of the Security Council prepared by the former Chairman of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions; and the special research report produced by the Security Council Report, entitled "Security Council transparency, legitimacy and effectiveness: efforts to reform Council working methods 1993-2007".

Responsibilities of the President

The responsibilities of the President were discussed in detail. In particular, one speaker emphasized that the President, as the "master of proceedings" for the current month, should undertake the following core functions: (i) share communications and information with the members of the Council at any time in a timely manner; (ii) handle the discussions in a very balanced manner; (iii) observe the provisional rules of procedure prudently; (iv) promote consensus-building among members whenever possible, with a view to preserving the unity of the Council; and (v) speak to the media and the public on behalf of Council members. With reference to the latter point, it was remarked that, in order to avoid confusion, the President should avoid speaking in his national capacity, while assuming an impartial approach without disclosing too much information about closed meetings to the media. On the issue of consensus-building, some speakers underscored the importance of maintaining the Council's unity and warned that the President should be very cautious in putting any issue to a vote. Another participant warned that consensus may sometimes be artificial, and that putting an issue to a vote could sometimes be helpful.

Security Council missions

Participants acknowledged that Security Council missions constituted a valuable way for the Council to carry out its responsibilities under the Charter. They provided a means for gathering first-hand information, interacting with the parties, building mutual trust with a wide range of local stakeholders, and eliminating misunderstandings, as reflected by the Council's recent missions in connection with the Kosovo issue and to various African countries. A discussant cautioned, however, that the use of this tool should be limited to three or four missions per year so they do not become a burden for Security Council members and the Secretariat. The same speaker pointed out that such missions do not constitute official visits of the Council and that their informal nature should be retained. With regard to the level and size of missions, participants welcomed the increasing tendency of members to participate at the ambassadorial level. On the other hand, it was pointed out that it should not be mandatory for all Council members to take part in missions, although it was felt that the participation of those members with a particular interest or

influence in the region should be encouraged. Referring to the post-mission phase, a speaker underlined that the recommendations included in the final report should provide appropriate guidance to the Secretariat as well as to United Nations missions on the ground for their future action.

Conduct of business of the Security Council

Improving transparency remained a priority, though it was acknowledged that a number of steps aimed at improving the Council's working methods had recently been undertaken. However, participants remarked that a number of provisions of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2006/507) were still far from being fully implemented.

Some speakers expressed concern about the overly formal nature of informal consultations, including the tendency of members to read prepared and lengthy statements, thus limiting the scope for a more strategic and decision-making oriented exchange of views. A different speaker, however, reminded participants that Ambassadors spoke on behalf of their Governments; therefore prepared statements were sometimes needed. In order to avoid extensive repetitions, while increasing the interactivity of discussions, another discussant appealed to Council members to avoid repeating the same concepts whenever they agreed with what was said by a previous speaker. The same participant noted that a precondition to making the Council's discussions more interactive and action-oriented was the full respect of confidentiality for positions expressed by delegations during informal consultations. According to some, this lack of confidentiality generated a tendency among Council members to shift real discussions outside the framework of informal consultations, notably through bilateral, permanent members, or Groups of Friends meetings. Another participant recommended focusing on exactly those procedural shortcomings that could be addressed by the Council members. In his view, other frictions, such as those caused by frequent information leaks to the media, are unavoidable because they are part of the nature of diplomacy.

Recognizing that elected members could not exert leadership on each specific issue of which the Council was seized, one speaker emphasized that a principle of "burden-sharing" could be beneficially applied. On the bulk of the active items on the Council's agenda, each member could focus on the issues of most interest to its delegation. Nevertheless, it was noted, all Council members should be granted the opportunity, as well as adequate time, to be informed about developments regarding other agenda items, to examine the proposed course of action, as well as to provide inputs to the decision-making process.

Cooperation with other United Nations organs and bodies

During the discussion, participants saw scope for improving the Council's efficiency and transparency through enhanced interaction with other United Nations organs and bodies such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat and the Peacebuilding Commission.

1. **General Assembly and Economic and Social Council**

According to several speakers, further engagement between the Council and the General Assembly should be considered. In particular, it was pointed out that it was very much in the interest of the elected members to build a culture of increased

interaction and cooperation between the two organs. Council members could hold more frequent briefings for members of their regional groups, as elected members were said to have a special responsibility for reaching out to non-members. One participant called for a more institutionalized consultation process between the Presidents of the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The discussion also touched upon another aspect of the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, namely the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. The annual report had frequently been criticized by the wider membership for lacking adequate analytical and substantive elements assessing the Council's work, including cases in which it had failed to act, as well as justifications for major actions it had taken. Responding to these criticisms, one speaker stated that the report should maintain its factual character, because it would be very difficult for the Secretariat to prepare a more analytic text and because such a text would have to be substantively discussed in the Council. However, the same speaker noted that, keeping in mind the sensitivity of the issue, there was room for making the report more comprehensive. He also recommended consulting with the Secretariat with a view to submitting the report some weeks earlier. By contrast, another discussant noted with disappointment that the improvements aimed at making the report more analytical, introduced by Singapore during its last tenure in the Council, were no longer taken into account. One participant claimed that, while the General Assembly was discussing the annual report in its joint debate from 12 to 14 November 2007, the Council was in session. In response, another speaker clarified that the President of the Security Council had specifically not convened the Council on 12 November, when the General Assembly had discussed the annual report.

2. Secretariat

Emphasizing that the Secretariat's role was to provide substantive services to the Security Council, one commentator stressed the importance of improving the efficiency of this cooperation. He suggested that it would be helpful if the issue could be thoroughly discussed with both the Secretary-General and the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs. At the same time, participants emphasized that the latter provided critical support to the Council, especially to the elected members, which often did not have at their disposal either the institutional memory or the resources of permanent members.

In the view of another speaker, the briefings from the Secretariat in informal consultations could be more purpose and result-oriented in order to provide members of the Council with enhanced guidance.

With reference to the good offices missions of the Secretary-General, one discussant questioned the extent to which the Security Council should be involved in providing support. It was argued that the Council should convey general support to the missions, while giving more discretion to the Secretary-General and his envoys and avoiding micromanagement. In this connection, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the International Compact with Iraq and Other Issues was cited as an example.

3. Peacebuilding Commission

Cooperation with the recently established Peacebuilding Commission was also discussed by participants. To one of the commentators, peacebuilding should not be seen in isolation from peacekeeping and, given the Council's responsibility for the latter, it was in the purview of the Council itself to decide which countries should be referred to the Commission. Another discussant contended that the Commission was a body with purely advisory functions that should not be seen as an instrument of economic and financial aid to countries on its agenda.

Broadening inputs and outreach

The need to increase the transparency and outreach of the Council's work was widely recognized by participants in three areas: (i) the interaction with non-members of the Security Council and troop-contributing countries; (ii) the interface with non-governmental organizations and experts; and (iii) the relationship with the media.

Several speakers underlined the importance of finding practical ways of associating the wider United Nations membership with the Council's work. A commentator recalled that, in the World Summit Outcome document, Heads of State and Government had recommended that the Security Council continue to adapt its working methods "so as to increase the involvement of States not members of the Council in its work". In this connection, efforts should be made to hold public meetings whenever possible. Thematic debates, mainly organized by non-permanent members, were also seen as a valuable tool for giving an opportunity for non-Council members to express their views. Two discussants stressed the importance of allowing non-Council members to speak prior to Council members in open debates, so that the opinions of the former could be taken into account by Council members in their subsequent statements as well as in the Council's decision-making process. Another participant concurred that such a practice could be highly beneficial, as it would show the Council's appreciation for the contributions of non-members, especially those particularly interested in or concerned with certain issues under discussion. A suggestion was also made to increase the involvement of non-Council members through regional groups, as well as to institutionalize a more interactive dialogue with the troop-contributing countries aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. Moreover, it was underlined that, as stated in the note by the President (S/2006/507), when drafting resolutions, presidential statements and press statements, members of the Council should increase their consultations with concerned/interested countries, as well as promote closer cooperation with relevant regional organizations. One participant cautioned that the perceived progress in enhancing outreach to and transparency vis-à-vis the broader United Nations membership might actually be an illusion because past reform efforts, such as the initiatives promoted by Singapore in 2002, had not been sustained by the Council in the long run and sometimes were later forgotten by the Council.

With regard to the relationship with civil society organizations, the "Arria-formula" meetings were seen as a valuable tool that many delegations had increasingly utilized in recent years. However, in the view of one speaker, these informal gatherings of the members of the Council should be used sparingly and their unofficial character should be retained, particularly when there is no

substantive consensus among Council members. In this regard, the same speaker contended that issues discussed during "Arria-formula" meetings should not be automatically considered as official agenda items of which the Security Council was seized. It was also argued that, specifically in the framework of the Council's subsidiary bodies, better access to Council members' experts could be beneficial.

In connection with the media, participants agreed that more attention needed to be paid to the balance between transparency and confidentiality. One participant urged caution in not disclosing confidential information discussed in informal consultations. A major concern, raised repeatedly by participants throughout the workshop, was that the frequency of "leaks" to the press, which discouraged Council members from speaking more freely during informal consultations and risked seriously undermining the Council's authority.

Session III
Security Council Committees and Working Groups

Moderator:

Ambassador R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa
Permanent Representative of Indonesia

Commentators:

Ambassador Jean-Maurice Ripert
Permanent Representative of France

Ambassador Johan C. Verbeke
Permanent Representative of Belgium

The opening comments and the discussion that followed focused on ways and means to ensure enhanced efficiency and effectiveness for the Council's subsidiary machinery. More specifically, in their remarks, participants elaborated on the following main themes: (i) Security Council working groups; (ii) working methods of the Council's subsidiary bodies and their relationship with the Council itself; (iii) responsibilities of the chairman in the conduct of the subsidiary bodies' business; (iv) proliferation of subsidiary bodies; and (v) general issues related to sanctions, including listing, de-listing, and monitoring.

Security Council working groups

One participant noted that thematic issues, such as the responsibility to protect, massive violations of human rights and impunity constituted new fields of action for the Security Council, presenting significant challenges to the way it operated. In connection with this expanded role for the Council, the speaker cited, as an example of good progress, the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. Through the efforts of this Working Group, the Council was able to adopt a comprehensive and action-oriented approach to issues such as child recruitment and the protection of children in situations of armed conflict. The mechanism in place foresaw a chain of actions: monitoring on the ground, reporting to the Council and, where appropriate, the application of sanctions and the referral of cases to the International Criminal Court. In the view of this participant, the Working Group had succeeded in combining, in one subsidiary body, a wide range of elements: political

will, tangible instruments, monitoring on the ground and follow-up actions. He indicated that some non-governmental organizations proposed extending this mechanism to other fields, such as "women and peace and security". Another participant, recalling that the proposed establishment of a subsidiary body addressing the issue of women and peace and security had faced some opposition on the basis that too many subsidiary bodies already existed, held the view that such bodies should be judged on their capacity to produce results. A third discussant cautioned that, in order to avoid further encroachment charges by some in the General Assembly, the Security Council should adopt a very prudent approach to opening up new fields of activity.

Working methods and the relationship between subsidiary bodies and the Council

According to one of the commentators, a clear distinction should be drawn between Security Council resolutions mandating sanctions regimes and the work on their actual implementation within a committee. The work on the resolution's implementation within a committee had to occur on the basis of the mandating resolution. Committee chairpersons should ensure that such subsidiary bodies are just a means of implementing the Council's resolutions and are not used as a forum to question or revisit the mandating resolution.

With reference to the working methods of the Council's subsidiary bodies, in the view of several participants, the principle of consensus constituted a problematic aspect of committee decision-making. It was noted that there was an "odd discrepancy" between voting in the Security Council, which still required a majority of 9 with no negative vote by a permanent member, and the committees' practice of operating under consensus rule. This peculiarity should not be over-emphasized, commented one participant, since chairpersons should in any event strive for consensus as a way of conveying greater unity and authority. At the same time, another speaker cautioned that it would be dangerous for the subsidiary bodies to develop their own decision-making methods, separate from the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. Two discussants proposed to remedy the discrepancy in voting procedures by adopting a modulated approach to committee decision-making based on the nature of actions that the subsidiary bodies had to perform. Another speaker concurred that a "one-size fits all" solution would not allow the committees to work efficiently and that a gradual approach could better serve this purpose. It was suggested that a wide array of tasks in which most sanctions committees were engaged, such as listing, de-listing, granting of humanitarian exemptions, overall review of sanctions lists and other actions such as writing letters and making démarches, might be best carried out with more flexible or special rules for reaching decisions. One participant explicitly endorsed the recommendations from a recent report by the International Peace Academy, undertaken in collaboration with the Center on Global Counter-Terrorism Cooperation, which was cited in the background paper prepared for the workshop.[1] Another speaker proposed that the listing of individuals could remain a consensus decision, whereas de-listing could be decided by a qualified majority, with or

[1] Eric Rosand, Alistair Millar and Jason Ipe, *The UN Security Council's Counterterrorism Program: What Lies Ahead?* (New York: International Peace Academy, 2007), quoted in Background Points and Possible Questions for Panel Sessions for this "hitting the Ground Running" round table.

without a veto for permanent members. Similarly, committees could consider a reversal of the current rules when deciding upon humanitarian exemptions, namely to grant the exception unless opposition against it was expressed. As regards the process of reviewing sanctions lists, a rule familiar in the comitology of the European Union could be applied. A first round of decisions could be taken by consensus, while a second round could be subject to a majority vote. Some participants noted that, as a matter of fact, some committees had already adopted their own rules of procedure, as contained in their respective guidelines. Another proposal related to the working methods of the Council's subsidiary organs concerned the organization of wrap-up sessions of committees at the Council level. It was suggested that issues that could not be resolved at the experts' level be discussed and decided at the ambassadorial level.

Responsibilities of the chairman

With a view to resolving possible situations of impasse, several speakers believed that it should be in the purview of the chairman to refer, if necessary, stalled matters within the subsidiary bodies to the Council for its consideration. By contrast, one speaker held the view that the chairman should not address the Security Council without the agreement of the committee. However, he believed that the chairman should inform the President of what his "sense" was of the issues at stake in the committee.

In more general terms, it was suggested by several participants that it would be helpful if Committee chairpersons be allowed to utilize a certain degree of flexibility in their actions, although always within the mandate established by the Council. For instance, one participant noted that the chairman should have the freedom to mention the existence of disagreements in his report to the Council. Another participant noted that, in view of the fact that sanctions committees had been set up to avoid over-burdening the Council's work with technical details, the chairpersons should exercise the responsibility of ensuring that the Committee fulfils this task. Rather than merely trying to find the lowest common denominator, Committee chairpersons should aim at making the Council more effective in discharging its larger responsibilities. As an example, a discussant raised the case of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), concerning the Sudan, in which the process of reaching consensus, including on the texts of press statements, was extremely difficult.

Proliferation of subsidiary bodies

Since the overall trend in the number and range of the Council's subsidiary bodies had been upward for some years, several participants expressed some concern about their proliferation. The increased number of sanctions committees, however, had suggested to some the need for greater coordination and coherence. In this connection, one discussant suggested that there was room for merging some of the committees and working groups, despite the fact that they had been established by different resolutions. A few speakers felt that this proposal could be particularly beneficial in the area of counter-terrorism, where three distinct committees performed similar functions. However, one discussant cautioned that the merger of different committees would only enhance the Council's effectiveness if it is done not only at the formal but also at the substantive level. He explained that in the field of counter-terrorism it would not be helpful merely to create a consolidated organ

with a notational agenda composed of separate points for each former committee dealing with counter-terrorism.

In terms of addressing terrorism, it was pointed out that the Council has a heavy workload. One speaker noted that, while the Council's response in this regard had been very expeditious, it had been implemented before the United Nations as a whole had developed a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. Above all, he cautioned, thought should be given to how the Council could best pursue this issue now that the General Assembly had adopted an overarching strategy. In response, one participant suggested that, since terrorism posed a threat to all Member States, the Security Council should promote closer cooperation and coordination with the General Assembly. The appointment of a new Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, he continued, may have opened a window of opportunity. Members of the General Assembly, he cautioned, tend to perceive the Security Council as seeking to retain too much control over the United Nations counter-terrorism effort. The same speaker suggested that enhanced cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism could go a long way towards reducing tensions between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Sanctions issues, including listing and de-listing, working with expert groups

A number of speakers warned of the risk of erosion of the credibility of several sanctions committees. According to one participant, unless sanctions regimes are continuously adjusted to changing dynamics on the ground, their credibility, and that of the Council, could be undermined. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) were mentioned as examples of committees requiring swift adjustments. In the former case, it was noted that the sanctions regime did not sufficiently take into account political changes since the conclusion of the Ouagadougou Agreement, whereas for the latter, the Committee was trapped in a "2001-2002 mindset" and needed to move forward under the guidance of its Chairman.

According to other participants, the credibility of sanctions committees had also been weakened by the fact that the procedures for listing and de-listing individuals on the consolidated lists had not yet been perfected. Criticisms were voiced about the lack either of transparency in such matters or of clear criteria for the listing and de-listing of individuals and entities. For instance, one participant inquired why the Al-Qaida and Taliban Committee's consolidated list comprised almost exclusively Muslims. While acknowledging the Council's need to act quickly to prevent acts of terrorism, the participant nevertheless lamented the "suspect nature" of the information provided to support listing requests. Similarly, another discussant expressed concern about the reliability of the sources of intelligence of listing requests. In response, one speaker asserted that such information goes through a series of stringent checks on the national level before being submitted to the Security Council. Another discussant recalled cases in which listing affected not only the legitimate target, but also people with identical names, many of which were quite common and widely used. According to this participant, people who fell into this category were unable to travel abroad, noting that even individuals serving their Governments in the diplomatic service had been unable to get visas. While acknowledging that the Council's procedures had already improved, the same

speaker also stated that there was room for an even more enhanced effort by the Security Council to make its listing and de-listing processes more transparent.

In the view of another speaker, the lack of due process and transparency, the retention of names of persons who were cleared by national courts, as well as the limited protection of the human rights of listed individuals, also undermined the credibility of the Council. With reference to the effect of legal sentences at the national level and their impact on committee lists, one participant underscored that the Security Council's work was a non-judicial enterprise that involved preventive diplomacy. The Council did not punish, rather it took preventive action for which it relied on a given set of information. Whether the person concerned had been subject to a national judicial process was taken into account, but this was not the only determining factor. This matter touched upon the larger issue of due process, and the speaker emphasized that all participants were aware that if the Council did not address questions of due process, the credibility of the sanctions instrument in the struggle against terrorism would be undermined.

Turning to the monitoring of sanctions, participants remarked that maintaining the credibility of the expert groups was a pivotal element, as these matters directly affected the credibility of the committees themselves. In this connection, the work of the expert groups was criticized as not always meeting the highest standards, with some of their reports characterized as somewhat questionable. In response, one participant lauded the high professionalism of the expert groups. While a participant contended that, in some cases, the expert groups had credible information, others felt that on occasion those groups made extrapolations based on a thin layer of evidence. In this regard, the case of Somalia, where the Monitoring Group had never visited that country, was cited as an example by this speaker. He also suggested that the Security Council consider organizing hearings with experts.

Session IV
Lessons learned: reflections by the class of 2007

Moderator:

Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad
Permanent Representative of the United States

Commentators:

Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
Permanent Representative of Qatar

Ambassador Peter Burian
Permanent Representative of Slovakia

Mr. Luis Enrique Chávez
Deputy Permanent Representative of Peru

Ambassador Leslie Kojo Christian
Permanent Representative of Ghana

Ambassador Luc Joseph Okio
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Congo

The moderator opened the session by congratulating the incoming members of the Council and noting that elected members add to the legitimacy and representative nature of the Council's work. He also emphasized the quantity of work that faces Council members.

Advice to new Security Council members

One speaker urged the newly elected members of the Council to use the time that remained before January 2008 to prepare to the extent possible for their tenures. It was important, in that regard, to have a quality team in place and to begin initiating contacts with the current Council membership from the level of Ambassadors down to that of experts. Another speaker observed that it was important not only to have quality staff in place, but also the appropriate quantity of personnel to function well in the Council. Once in the Council, there would be little time to address human resource issues. Cautioning the incoming Ambassadors to not attempt "to cover all matters" on their own, one speaker emphasized the role of experts in helping Ambassadors to learn the issues. The speaker also called the political coordinators the "right hand" of the Permanent Representatives and indicated that, to be effective, they must have a very strong work ethic. Warning the newly elected members that their Council obligations would take up a significant amount of their time, one participant underlined that attending to other matters in the United Nations could be difficult. However, he cautioned elected members "to resist the temptation" of being kept away from other business in the United Nations, since their terms on the Council would last only two years.

Another speaker focused on some of the pitfalls facing incoming Council members. Items on the Council's agenda, for example, were not always a priority for the Foreign Ministries of newly elected Council members. Therefore, there was much catching up and studying for the incoming members to do prior to joining the Council. One delegation noted that it can take a full six months to get accustomed to the issues before the Council. Non-permanent members, he stressed, did not possess institutional memory and were often not familiar with the Council's provisional rules of procedure. New members, however, could rely on the advice of more experienced Council members to address this knowledge gap. One participant also underscored the value of Secretariat briefings and advice in learning issues on the Council's agenda. It was also noted that UNITAR trainings were beneficial for new Council members. It was observed that one disadvantage for small delegations was that they did not have ambassadorial representation in many of the countries that were on the Council's agenda, therefore causing a high degree of dependence on the reports of the Secretary-General. It was suggested that non-governmental organizations, which had first-hand knowledge from the ground, could be a valuable source of information. Some speakers also observed that the publications issued by the Security Council report provided useful perspectives on the Council's work.

Elected members, according to one participant, could add special value to the work of the Council by focusing on issues in which they had a unique perspective or experience, even if they do not know every detail of every issue. This might include members whose countries had gone through a transitional period between different political or economic systems or those with experience in security sector reform or development. In this respect, one interlocutor pointed to his delegation's experience during its tenure of focusing on the issue of security sector reform, which in turn had enhanced its expertise in terms of other Council agenda items that, for instance,

included elements of post-conflict peacebuilding. Other speakers suggested that members would be effective by pursuing issues on the Council that were aligned with their strategic interests.

One participant underscored for newly elected members the importance of emphasizing the implementation of Council resolutions. In his view, resolutions were at times adopted simply to "score political points" without sufficient regard for their eventual implementation. He commented that such instances greatly undermined the Council's credibility. In a similar vein, another speaker subsequently noted that resolution 1706 (2006) on the Sudan was adopted with some abstentions and that, in practice, that resolution had not been implemented. On the other hand, resolution 1769 (2007) on the same item had been adopted unanimously and was being implemented. When members were "determined to come together", it was observed, the prospects for implementation rose. One speaker urged elected Council members to be "careful" with the permanent members, whether an elected member was "with or against them" on a given issue. In this regard, another participant encouraged elected members to be "brave enough to resist the challenges" of the permanent members when holding the Council's presidency. The presidency, he added, included the responsibility to promote consensus, for example, in avoiding what might be a "hasty call for a vote" on a draft resolution.

Security Council presidency

Acknowledging the difficulties inherent in preparing for a Council presidency, a speaker underscored that it was mainly a "learning by doing" process. Another suggested focusing on a thematic issue to give structure to one's presidency. This should entail preparing one's own delegation and other Council members, so that the thematic debate could be expected to result in a substantive outcome. However, it was cautioned that Council Presidents should not raise a thematic issue for its own sake. To boost the Council's credibility and that of other United Nations organs, they should demonstrate a consistent focus on those thematic issues well beyond the term of their presidencies. Another speaker advocated employing a "wider picture" for viewing issues on the Council agenda. For this reason, he deemed thematic debates to be of importance, as well as an area in which elected members could work effectively in the Council. However, he advised that, while some thematic debates belong in the General Assembly, those related to the maintenance of international peace and security belong in the Security Council.

One participant queried how a delegation should balance its responsibilities as Council President with its national responsibilities. A discussant responded that the delegation holding the presidency could always convey its national position in formal meetings or informal consultations. Another referred to the responsibility of the presidency to build consensus in the Council in a way that corresponds to national interests, using the analogy that a Council President does not have "two heads but a bigger head" during the month-long term. It was also suggested that the Council President should appreciate the linkages between domestic and international affairs, as Council Presidents should be skilled at managing expectations back home during their tenure by communicating well with domestic government, media and civil society.

Influence of elected members on the Security Council's work

One speaker advised newly elected members to find their "natural places" in the Council. While it was important not to overestimate their own influence, it was also important that it not be underestimated. In his view, there were two "entry points" into the work of the Council, including one that was "power-based" and which he attributed to having the right of veto. The second entry point, which could be utilized by all members of the Council, he characterized as "authority-based". Directing his comments to the incoming five, he added that such an influence depended upon how members built their respective authority and credibility in the Council's debates. In this context, he underscored that elected members could put forward very strong arguments and positions on issues before the Council. He also advised the new members to become engaged in the issues as opposed to "standing on the sidelines", as well as to concentrate on items on which their delegations had a strategic interest.

One elected member addressed the perception that the Council was a non-democratic entity. In spite of the power of the permanent members, he observed, they needed the support of the elected members to take action in the Council since nine affirmative votes — in the absence of a veto — were required for a resolution to be adopted. In addition, consensus among all members was needed for the Council to express itself in other forms, such as with presidential statements and press statements. In arriving at such consensus, he emphasized, the elected members could play a very active part. Another speaker also observed that elected members could contribute to shaping policy through committee chairmanships, especially since committees such as the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) or the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan were not obscure subsidiary bodies without influence. So the role of elected members in committees belies the notion they were mere servants of the permanent members. In discussing possible expansion of the Council, one speaker suggested that, while the current composition of the Council did not reflect regional proportionality nor often the interests of some regional groups, expanding Council membership to resolve this challenge could compromise the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council.

Another participant questioned the perception that Council members tend to address issues as a single body. In fact, differences frequently arise among members, since national interests were often at stake. One discussant, in urging consensus and unity among Council members, asserted that the African members of the Council have a real opportunity to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security on that continent.

Transparency and encroachment

There were several comments about the transparency of the Council's work. One elected member noted that his delegation had not been excluded from many issues to which it wanted to contribute. By contrast, he pointed out that this was not always the case with other United Nations organs, referring specifically to "some of the negotiation processes" undertaken in the General Assembly. Some speakers pointed to referring specifically to mechanisms through which the Council demonstrates transparency, including regional briefings, open debates, and "Arria-formula" meetings. Another speaker, on the other hand, suggested that the

Council's work often suffered from a lack of transparency, not just for the broader United Nations membership but also for elected members of the Council itself. He observed that on a number of occasions permanent members had negotiated draft resolutions without informing elected members. At times, it was recalled, elected members would find out about these draft resolutions at the same time they were released to the media.

Whenever a member intended to bring up an issue under "other matters" in informal consultations, one participant thought it advisable that beforehand this be brought to the attention of other members on a bilateral basis. On the question of sharing information outside of the Council, he stressed the need to strike a balance between this expectation and the issue of confidentiality. This speaker, echoed by another, deemed it important for members to keep their capitals well informed of the Council's consideration of issues, most notably to enable the capitals to revert in good time with instructions. This would also allow capitals to reflect "at a distance" on the reporting from New York. The need to ensure that the capitals were "on board" with the delegations at United Nations Headquarters was also stressed.

Another speaker described his delegation's entry to the Council as a "revelation". Notable was its realization that, given the nature of the Council's work, some issues were more effectively addressed in informal consultations where the Council was out of the "glare of the public and the press". Still, this approach to the conducting of Council business led to a perception that it lacked transparency. Another participant remarked that sharing too much information with the press created many problems, including at times delaying Council action.

One speaker addressed the view that the Council encroached on the mandates of other United Nations organs. While the speaker said that this could be true, he wondered to what extent the Council was actually "depriving" other organs of their prerogatives. He suggested that perhaps the Council was simply taking on issues that the other organs were not addressing effectively. It was also noted that non-Council members could, at any time, draw the Council's attention to issues by submitting communications to the President to be shared with Council members and which, if so requested, could also be issued as documents of the Council.

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Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General on the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1769 (2007), by which the Council requested me to report every 30 days on the implementation of paragraph 5 of the resolution, including on the status of financial, logistical and administrative arrangements for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), and on the extent of the Operation's progress towards achieving full operational capability. The report covers steps taken towards these goals during the month of February 2008. A separate report will be submitted pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 1769 (2007).

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in Darfur deteriorated dramatically in some areas during the month of February 2008, while other areas experienced relative stability. Increased hostilities in Western Darfur over the reporting period have led to significant displacement and loss of civilian life, while also inhibiting humanitarian access to civilian populations affected by the fighting. This situation has been further complicated by the presence of Chadian rebels in Western Darfur, who continue to regroup. While Northern and Southern Darfur have remained relatively stable in comparison, isolated security incidents have occurred in those States with consequences for the civilian population.

3. On the morning of 8 February, the Sudanese Armed Forces and allied militia launched an attack on Abu Suruj, a former stronghold of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), located north of El Geneina in Western Darfur. The Government-led attack included over 130 vehicles, hundreds of militia, three attack helicopters, and at least one Antonov aircraft. Much of Abu Suruj was burned down during the course of the attack, and thousands of civilians fled the fighting, including towards Chad and other areas in the vicinity. In an assessment done in the area by UNAMID and humanitarian agencies on 12 February, residents of Abu Suruj informed the assessment team that approximately 28 civilians had been killed in the attack. They further reported that JEM forces had fled prior to the hostilities, and stated that the

attack appeared to be focused on the destruction of the village and the targeting of civilians fleeing the area.

4. A joint Government and militia force attacked Sirba, in the same vicinity as Abu Suruj, also on 8 February, killing approximately 42 civilians, including a tribal leader. Local residents reported that several thousand civilians fled Sirba during the attack, and indicated that just under half of the town had been burned to the ground. On the evening of 8 February, Seleia, which lies just north-east of Sirba, was bombed by Government aircraft.

5. The Government offensive resumed on 18 February, when the Sudanese Armed Forces and allied militia attacked JEM and SLM/A-Abdul Wahid positions in Aro Sharow, Kandare and Kurlongo, which are situated in the Jebel Moon area of Western Darfur. During the attacks, Antonov aircraft of the Sudanese Armed Forces dropped at least five bombs in Aro Sharow, and an additional eight bombs on Kandare and Kurlongo. These areas hosted displaced civilians from the attacks of 8 February on Abu Suruj, Sirba and Seleia.

6. A major build-up of Government forces around Jebel Moon followed the attacks of 18 February. This included a conglomeration of regular Sudanese Armed Forces, allied militia, heavy artillery and aircraft. Heavy fighting ensued over the course of several days, the Government assault being directed at the JEM and SLM/A-Abdul Wahid forces that have long controlled the area. Because of the ongoing hostilities, UNAMID and the humanitarian community have not been able to gain access to the area. However, there are indications that the fighting has had grave humanitarian consequences for civilians there. On 22 February, JEM and SLM/A-Abdul Wahid commanders called UNAMID senior leadership and humanitarian agencies, seeking the intervention of UNAMID to provide safe passage to civilians trapped by the fighting in the Jebel Moon area. Government officials subsequently indicated to the Joint Special Representative, Rodolphe Adada, that they would be willing to identify a staging area in one of their controlled areas from which women and children could proceed to a safe area. Discussions between UNAMID, the humanitarian agencies and parties involved in the fighting are ongoing to ensure that the civilians trapped by the fighting can safely leave the area and receive the humanitarian assistance that they require. The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sudan estimates that there are close to 20,000 civilians in the area.

7. The civilians who have been displaced from Seleia are reportedly not returning to the town, because of the presence of large numbers of Government troops in the area. UNAMID estimates that a company of soldiers from the Sudanese Armed Forces is present within Seleia, while a brigade — or about 2,400 soldiers — is in the area surrounding the town. In addition, there are reports of persistent looting of local residents by Government-allied militia in and around Seleia.

8. Despite the fact that the direct confrontation between the rebel movements in Jebel Moon and the Sudanese Armed Forces had largely stopped by 25 February, reported troop movements to the area suggest that there is a likelihood of renewed violence, which would put the estimated 20,000 civilians there at risk.

9. During the reporting period, there has also been a marked upsurge in violence in Southern Darfur. On 29 February, a Government patrol was ambushed at Amr Gedid, approximately 80 km north of Nyala, by SLM/A-Unity forces. Five

Government soldiers were reportedly killed and eight injured in the attack. On the same day, a Government police patrol was attacked by a group of militia in Domaya, 7 km north-west of Nyala. Two Government soldiers were reported killed and 14 injured. On 1 March, a commercial convoy of 43 trucks and fuel tankers accompanied by a Government police escort was ambushed by SLM/A-Unity forces near Gabat Hamada, 85 km north of Nyala. Six Government soldiers were reportedly killed and six wounded in the attack. Government authorities in Nyala reported that a combined military and police convoy was dispatched to the area and managed to recover one of the four stolen tankers.

10. There were also security incidents involving inter-tribal fighting in both Northern and Southern Darfur. On 27 February, a group of approximately 160 men on horses and camels from the Rizeigat and Salamat tribes attacked Habaniya tribesmen in the town of El Sunita in Southern Darfur. In addition to the 21 people reported killed during the attack, a number of civilians were injured and parts of El Sunita were set ablaze. Six of the attackers were reported to have been killed, and 21 captured. On 28 February, the Habaniya retaliated and killed 60 people in an area east of Gereida. In Northern Darfur, fighting between the Zaghawa and Beni Hussein tribes is reported to have displaced approximately 300 people during the reporting period.

11. Targeted attacks against humanitarian workers and their assets continue to severely constrain humanitarian operations. During the first two months of 2008, 54 vehicles were hijacked, including two UNAMID vehicles and 32 trucks contracted to the World Food Programme (WFP). Eighteen WFP-contracted drivers are still missing. During the same period, 14 humanitarian premises were attacked by armed persons and four humanitarian compounds were destroyed and looted during the surge in violence north of El Geneina in Western Darfur.

III. Humanitarian and human rights situation

12. While there has been displacement of civilians in all three Darfur States during the month of February, the situation in the northern corridor of Western Darfur, including the towns of Sirba, Abu Suruj, Seleia, Bir Saliba and Seraf Jidad and the Jebel Moon area, is currently causing the greatest humanitarian concern in the region. Since JEM attacked this area in December 2007, the Government has denied humanitarian agencies access to areas north of Seraf Jidad. This has cut off humanitarian assistance to some 160,000 conflict-affected people. The Government has indicated that access will not be granted for humanitarian assistance until it has regained full control of these areas.

13. An estimated 12,000 civilians, including local humanitarian workers, fled into Chad as a result of the attacks on 8 February on Abu Suruj, Sirba and Seleia. One aid worker was killed during those hostilities. During the subsequent attacks, on 18 February, the Government authorities banned all humanitarian flights to the north of El Geneina. This had the effect of severing all humanitarian assistance to civilians in the area.

14. As the fighting subsided in some areas, humanitarian assistance missions were able to visit Kondobe, Sirba, Abu Suruj, Seraf Jidad and Seleia, allowing for the provision of a limited amount of emergency humanitarian assistance. While displaced persons have been slowly beginning to return to Sirba and Seleia, and

some assistance is being provided, humanitarian workers are still being denied access to the Jebel Moon area, where there are several thousand internally displaced persons from the Seleia area, in addition to approximately 8,000 conflict-affected residents.

15. The attacks of 8 and 18 February in Western Darfur were conducted in a way that violated international humanitarian law and a number of basic human rights norms. Residents who witnessed the attacks reported that a number of civilians, including women and children, were killed and injured in the hostilities. The aerial bombardments were described in many reports as indiscriminate, as they failed to distinguish between military and civilian objects and used disproportionate means of warfare.

IV. Mission strength and capability

16. As at 29 February, the total strength of UNAMID was 9,212 uniformed personnel, including 7,467 military personnel, 1,605 police officers, and one formed police unit, as well as 1,312 civilians.

17. With the deployment of the mission's senior leadership and a sizeable portion of international and national civilian staff, a number of substantive units have begun their work in earnest. Civil affairs, public information, human rights, gender, and humanitarian liaison units have been established and to varying degrees have projected their presence across the sectors.

18. The Civil Affairs Unit has held a number of consultations with civil society, to reinforce the primacy of the political process and to enhance the capacity of civil society to address issues related to land, compensation, wealth sharing, and the return and reintegration of internally displaced persons, among other things. These consultations have also focused on identifying ways to strengthen some of the critical mechanisms of the Darfur Peace Agreement, such as the Peace and Reconciliation Council, as well as to strengthen the capacities of civil society groups. The Darfur-Darfur Dialogue Preparatory Committee secretariat has undertaken consultations with the Darfurian diaspora in Chad and the United States of America and is planning further consultations in the Middle East. These activities are complementary to the efforts of the Special Envoys and are being coordinated with the Joint Mediation Support Team.

19. Mine action teams and equipment have deployed to the mission's area of operations. The unexploded ordnance clearance and mine risk education teams began their operations in the Kutum rural area around Hashaba in Northern Darfur. The teams cleared two known bombs dropped by aircraft. This operation was followed by a general mine action assessment of approximately 40 km^2 around Hashaba. Disposal of unexploded ordnance will allow area residents to safely resume farming and grazing activities.

20. Construction of the mission's infrastructure is ongoing, although significantly hindered by the lack of sufficient military engineer units. With the limited means at its disposal, UNAMID is currently working to upgrade, expand or relocate 32 camps in Darfur and establish two additional camps. The creation of additional office space for the mission and construction of hard-wall warehouses to protect sensitive and valuable assets from heat, dust and theft is a priority. The construction of living

accommodation for civilian staff is also vital, given the limited availability of accommodation within the local market. Contractual arrangements for supplies of fuel and rations to the mission have been concluded and arrangements for other essential supplies will be finalized shortly.

V. Force and police generation

21. The 135-person advance party of the Chinese engineer company is now permanently based in the Nyala supercamp, where it is developing the infrastructure for the mission in Nyala. The unit's main body of 175 people is scheduled to complete its deployment to Nyala by 5 April. The Egyptian transport unit is scheduled to arrive in Nyala on 16 March and the Egyptian engineer unit is scheduled to arrive in El Geneina on 24 March. The Nigerian level II hospital is scheduled to arrive in El Geneina on 5 April.

22. With respect to the deployment of additional infantry units to UNAMID, the Egyptian battalion is expected to deploy its lead company group to Nyala on 19 March, the remainder of the battalion completing its deployment on 15 April. The Ethiopian battalion's lead company group is scheduled to arrive in El Fasher on 7 April. The remainder of the battalion will complete its deployment on 15 May. Preparations for the deployment of the Thai infantry battalion and the Nepalese force and sector reserve units continue. They will be deployed once the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions have arrived in Darfur. The remaining five African infantry battalions are not expected to deploy before mid-2008, when their major equipment procurement programmes have been completed.

23. The timely deployment of these battalions will be linked to donor countries' efforts to support troop contributors with equipment, training and self-sustainment capability. The priority in this regard is for this support to increase the capacity of the existing ex-AMIS (African Union Mission in the Sudan) troops and their rotations, which are due to deploy in the next three to four months. It is absolutely critical that the incoming troops have self-sustaining capability and equipment to enable them to patrol and effectively carry out their operations.

24. With the exception of Ethiopia's pledge of four light tactical helicopters, credible offers for utility helicopters and the remainder of the light tactical helicopters, aerial reconnaissance aircraft, and logistics and transport units remain outstanding. The process of generating suitably qualified candidates for the force and sector headquarters staff continues. Some 599 of 670 staff officers are currently deployed. The focus remains on the selection and deployment of suitably qualified and competent officers to increase the staff capacity of the various headquarters.

25. Preparations are under way for the arrival of the next three formed police units from Egypt, Indonesia and Nepal. There were predeployment visits to Egypt and Indonesia to inspect the formed police units, from 23 to 30 January and from 2 to 8 February, respectively. The Nepalese formed police unit's major equipment arrived in Port Sudan on 18 February.

26. The deployment of formed police units has been identified as a priority for the mission. However, many of the police-contributing countries are not ready for expeditious deployment. To assist the contributing countries in making necessary deployment arrangements, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations plans to

send assessment missions to those countries to identify equipment shortfalls and other constraints hindering the deployment of formed police units to the mission area.

27. It should be noted that the deployment of troops and police has in some instances been delayed by lengthy ground transport time from Port Sudan. At present there are no commercial trucks available to transport the equipment of the Nepalese formed police unit from Port Sudan to Darfur. The mission is exploring alternative options to ensure that incoming personnel and equipment are transported to the mission area as swiftly as possible.

VI. Military and police activities

28. The military component has significantly bolstered its activities in the mission area in order to increase its visibility and strengthen confidence within the local population. Several hundred short- and long-range patrols are conducted throughout Darfur on a monthly basis. In response to the recent hostilities, particularly in the Jebel Moon area, the force has tripled the number of confidence-building patrols and convoy escorts that it undertakes in Western Darfur. UNAMID vehicle patrols have been mounted into the area south of Jebel Moon from both Kulbus and El Geneina. These limited operations will continue as long as the situation in the area remains tense. The longer-term intent is to reinforce Kulbus with additional troops so as to permit the continuous deployment of at least a platoon. UNAMID police intend to increase their presence in Seleia as soon as appropriate facilities are built.

29. UNAMID is considering additional measures to reinforce Sector West, so as to bolster its monitoring of the area and provide additional protection for the local population. It should be noted, however, that there are serious logistical constraints, including the availability of basic camp facilities in the Seleia area, and the mission's ability to resupply this camp with the limited transportation assets currently at its disposal.

30. The Force Commander has increased his contacts with the parties to enable the mission to better assess their movements, intent and capabilities, while also instilling within them the confidence that UNAMID is an impartial actor in Darfur. These increased contacts were particularly important during the recent crisis in Jebel Moon. The mission continues to work with the Government, JEM and SLM/A-Abdul Wahid to ensure that the civilians trapped by the fighting are given safe passage to a secure location.

31. Core elements of the Joint Operations Centre, Joint Mission Analysis Centre and Joint Logistics Centre were established in February. These mission headquarters components will contribute significantly to the effectiveness of the force and sector headquarters, and will assist in better strategizing military and police operations, including through the more efficient use of the military observers and liaison officers.

32. The Bangladeshi formed police unit is now co-located with the Chinese engineer unit in the Nyala supercamp. The formed police unit is undertaking regular patrols and providing regular escorts for the internally displaced persons from Kalma and other camps around Nyala in order to facilitate firewood collection. On

27 February the unit conducted a long-range patrol from Nyala to El Fasher, visiting six camps of internally displaced persons in the course of the patrol.

33. UNAMID police are currently conducting an average of 125 daily confidence-building patrols between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. in 45 community policing posts across the three sectors. Night patrols have commenced on a small scale in selected areas and are expected to be expanded further.

34. A Joint State Police Committee to combat crime was inaugurated on 4 February at the Government's Police Headquarters in Nyala, Southern Darfur, under the Chairmanship of the Southern Darfur State Police Commissioner. Members of the Committee include Government officials of Southern Darfur in immigration, police, customs and State security, the Popular Defence Force and the Mobile Police Unit, in addition to the UNAMID Police Sector Commander. The Committee will meet regularly to resolve matters related to the operations of UNAMID police.

35. UNAMID has been working closely with the Wali of Southern Darfur to establish a joint State committee for combating violence against women and children. The Committee, comprising representatives of the Government of the Sudan, UNAMID and United Nations agencies, will oversee and follow up on all registered cases relating to gender-based violence and violence against children.

VII. Financial arrangements

36. The General Assembly, by its resolution 62/232, authorized the establishment of a special account for UNAMID and appropriated the amount of $1,275.7 million for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, equivalent to $106.3 million per month, for its establishment.

37. As at 28 February 2008, contributions received for the Special Account for UNAMID amounted to $274.3 million, out of a total assessed amount of $1,267.2 million for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. As at 30 November 2007, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $2,964.9 million.

38. Reimbursement of troop-contributing Governments for troop and contingent-owned equipment costs is scheduled for March 2008, subject to availability of funds.

VIII. Legal arrangements

39. Following lengthy consultations on the status-of-forces agreement between UNAMID and the Government of the Sudan, the Joint Special Representative, Rodolphe Adada, and the Foreign Minister of the Sudan, Deng Alor, signed the document on 9 February 2008. The agreement constitutes a significant step forward in ensuring that UNAMID has the ability to effectively discharge its mandate under clear terms and provisions. It will be critical to the effectiveness of the mission that the status-of-forces agreement is implemented in the spirit of transparency and collaboration.

40. In the meantime, the African Union and the United Nations are finalizing the exchange of letters which will define the partnership between the two organizations with respect to UNAMID.

IX. Challenges to deployment

41. UNAMID continues to face a number of logistical challenges with regard to the timely and effective deployment of the mission. The ability to receive incoming units is dependent on the establishment of transit accommodations, which are not currently sufficient for the planned arrival of a significant number of troops and police. The Government has still not provided UNAMID with the land it requires in El Geneina, Western Darfur. This is already leading to logistical difficulties and will delay the deployment of troops and police to the area. As a result of the limited planning capacity of UNAMID, outstanding requirements for land, and the lack of mission enablers currently deployed to the mission, preparations for additional deployments are constrained.

42. In order to achieve a geographical balance of troop contributors in each sector, as well as a balance of capabilities among them, it will be necessary to redeploy a number of contingents currently serving in UNAMID upon their next rotation. This requires a significant amount of planning, to ensure that the necessary support structures are in place, taking into consideration the varying levels of self-sustainment capabilities among troop contributors.

43. The force continues to be constrained logistically as it transitions from the AMIS to the UNAMID supply system. Similarly, the mission is further hampered by aging equipment inherited from AMIS. Substandard communications equipment and systems have implications for the effectiveness of the force's command and control. In this regard, until the deployment of United Nations equipment and systems is complete, the force has no choice but to send operational messages via commercial Internet to some outlying bases.

44. There have been no additional pledges for the missing aviation and transportation units over the reporting period. UNAMID still lacks one heavy and one medium ground transport unit, three military utility aviation units (18 helicopters in total), and additional attack helicopters to meet the full operation requirement. As mentioned above, Ethiopia has pledged four attack helicopters. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is continuing discussions with troop contributors and key stakeholders concerning provision of the remaining two light tactical helicopters, as well as the additional missing units. The Department is also exploring other options such as the transfer of existing capabilities from other missions.

X. Peace negotiations

45. The African Union-United Nations Special Envoys and the Joint Mediation Support Team continued the consultation phase of the Darfur peace process with increased engagement with the five Darfur movement groupings — JEM, SLM/A-Abdul Shafie, SLM/A-Abdul Wahid, SLM/A-Unity and the United Resistance Front (URF) — and the Government of National Unity. Over the course of the reporting

period, frequent missions were undertaken to Darfur, Juba and the subregion to meet with the leaders and representatives of the movements. During the meetings, the Joint Mediation Support Team discussed the movements' unification efforts, possibilities for developing a common negotiation team, a common platform for the talks, agreement on a cessation of hostilities, the participation of civil society and other related matters.

46. However, the security situation in Chad and in Western Darfur has had a negative effect on the ability of the mediation to conduct planned consultations with the movements and the ability of the movements to hold consultations among themselves. As a result, ongoing unification efforts, especially with respect to reaching agreement on a common position and negotiating team, are made more difficult. The five movement groupings, which emerged in December 2007, remain intact and no further coalitions have developed.

47. In support of the unification initiative launched by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Juba, the Joint Mediation Support Team attempted to facilitate the transport of several movement representatives from Juba to Darfur (SLM/A-Abdul Shafie) and from Darfur to Juba (URF). Owing to the precarious security situation in Darfur and on the border areas, the air operations were temporarily postponed.

48. In parallel, the Joint Mediation Support Team, UNAMID and the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation worked together to finalize a plan of action and strategy for the inclusion of civil society organizations, representatives of internally displaced persons and traditional/tribal leaders in the political process. The Support Team is also closely collaborating with UNAMID on the substantive areas of public information, military and security issues, civil affairs and human rights.

49. The mediation is also continuing its engagement with regional and international partners. The Special Envoys held informal consultations with partners at Geneva on 17 and 18 March to discuss and reach a common understanding on the way forward for the political process. The participants agreed that security is the current priority in Darfur, and stressed that all possible efforts must be made to improve the security environment, and to encourage the parties to put an end to the violence.

XI. Observations

50. For UNAMID to be an effective force, with the ability to protect the population of Darfur, we must pursue all means possible to deploy quickly and with the required capabilities. As I discussed in Dakar on 13 March with the President of the Sudan, Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, as a matter of first priority we are accelerating the deployment of Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions. Following their arrival, we will prioritize the deployment of the Thai and Nepalese units, which are ready to deploy and possess the required capabilities to make UNAMID an effective force.

51. While the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and all levels of the United Nations Secretariat continue to pursue options with regard to the missing aviation and transportation assets, it is incumbent upon Member States to pledge these critical capabilities, or prevail upon other States that may be in a position to do so. The deployment of UNAMID without these critical assets will make it a force that

lacks the capability to respond to the challenges and complex environment in which it is deployed.

52. Tensions between Chad and the Sudan are also having a destabilizing effect in Darfur. I call on both countries to desist from supporting the other's rebel groups, and to find a peaceful means to address the instability in the border area. To this end, I look forward to the implementation of the Dakar Agreement signed by President Al-Bashir and President Idriss Déby on 13 March, which commits the two countries to normalizing relations and doing everything within their means to restore security in the border region.

53. Violence in Darfur, particularly in Western Darfur, continues to result in the displacement and suffering of tens of thousands of innocent civilians and will inevitably slow the deployment of UNAMID. I urge all parties involved to immediately abandon the path of military confrontation, commit themselves to the political process in order to find a peaceful solution to the crisis and, in this regard, provide their full support and cooperation to the efforts led by the Special Envoys.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 16
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Identical letters dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 24 March 2008, on the latest statement of the State Duma of the Russian Federation on the Russian Federation's policy with respect to Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transdniestria (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 16, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasani**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

08-28335 (E) 260308

Annex to the identical letters dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

24 March 2008

On 21 March 2008 the State Duma, Russia's lower house of Parliament, issued a statement on "the Russian Federation's policy with respect to Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Transdniestria".

That document, which views the sovereign right of a country to determine independently its own foreign-political priorities as a motive for justifying infringement of Georgia's territorial integrity, presents yet another attempt to interfere openly in the internal affairs of the neighbouring sovereign State and is directly aimed, in terms of both meaning and pathos, against the main principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and United Nations resolutions.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia is particularly concerned over the fact that the State Duma's statement contains calls for the President and the Government of the Russian Federation to consider the expediency of recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Georgia's territorial integrity is recognized and guaranteed by the norms of international law as well as 36 resolutions adopted regarding the conflict by the Security Council since 1993. The statement of the Russian State Duma is at variance with all the above-mentioned documents and indicates again that the Russian Federation has deprived itself of any political, legal or moral right to claim the role of a neutral and unbiased mediator in the conflict resolution process.

Of concern to the Georgian Foreign Ministry is that part of the statement in which members of the Russian State Duma call on the Government of the Russian Federation "to consider the possibility of reinforcing the potential of peacekeeping forces in the Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian conflict zones and to take into account other measures aimed at ensuring peace and security in this region".

Against the background of the Russian Federation's unilateral withdrawal from the 19 January 1996 decision of the CIS Council of Heads of State on measures for settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, this recommendation of the State Duma poses a real threat of the region's militarization, military cooperation with the separatist regimes and Russia's illegal military presence in the region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia states that any step taken without the consent of the Georgian authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia concerning the modification of the strength of the military contingent stationed there, armaments, mandate, terms, configuration or any other parameter, as well as deployment of any new armed unit, will be considered, in compliance with resolution 3314 (XXIX) (14 December 1974) of the United Nations General Assembly, as an act of aggression, with all the ensuing consequences, directed against the State of Georgia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia strongly urges the international community to give due assessment to the actions of the Russian State authorities and react adequately to prevent possible escalation of the tension in the region.

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Letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In response to certain baseless allegations made by the representative of the Israeli regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran at today's meeting of the Security Council, I wish to bring to your attention the position of my delegation on the said unfounded allegations, as contained in the annex to this letter.

Since our request to exercise our legitimate right to respond to those groundless allegations at the Council's meeting was denied, I should be grateful if you could bring the content of this letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council and to circulate them as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammad **Khazaee**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-28329 (E) 270308

Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Response by the Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the baseless allegations made by the representative of the Israeli regime

Before the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

25 March 2008

The representative of the Israeli regime made certain baseless allegations and absurd distortions against my country at today's meeting of the Council. Therefore, I wish to state the following:

We categorically reject the allegations made by the representative of the Israeli regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran in his statement before the Security Council today. Resorting to slanders, distortions and unfounded allegations has become a routine and indeed tired practice for the Zionist regime by which the said regime intends to distract the international community's attention from the appalling crimes that it has committed, and continues to commit, against the Palestinian people.

Iran has repeatedly emphasized that its support for the Palestinian people is of a humanitarian and moral nature. The legitimate cause of Palestine and the plight of the Palestinian people are high on the agenda of the international community as was demonstrated in the discussions of the Council today, including in the statements made by the majority of Council members as well as by the Chairmen of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The international community is undoubtedly aware of this Israeli ploy, and therefore, no amount of slander and smokescreen will be able to cover up this obvious fact that the main reason for the instability and insecurity in the region with serious ramifications for the whole world is the State terrorism, occupation and aggression perpetrated by this brutal regime. As reported to the Council today by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, throughout the period under review, the situation in the Palestinian territories has unfortunately deteriorated and the Israeli war machine has continued to be relentlessly at work, shattering the lives and livelihoods of the innocent Palestinian people. In gross violation of international law, international humanitarian law and the most basic human rights principles, the Zionist regime has continued and intensified its crimes against the Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, especially through massacring the people, destroying civilian infrastructures, expansion of illegal settlements, construction of the apartheid separation Wall and imposing a humanitarian crisis on a whole population that has been actually imprisoned in the Gaza Strip for years.

Only in the past few weeks, as a result of brutal Israeli attacks against the occupied Palestinian territories and the innocent Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, more than 140 people have been killed and hundreds have been wounded — many of them women and children. The illegal closures, the inhumane restrictions and the

crippling siege imposed by the Israeli regime against Palestinians, and the ensuing humanitarian crisis, have brought about a disastrous situation on the ground that in many aspects is unprecedented in recent memory. The Israeli regime has even blocked the free movement of humanitarian, medical and basic goods for the innocent Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip. Indeed, these atrocities which seem to be aimed at the annihilation of an entire population are clear examples of collective punishment and amount to genocide and ethnic cleansing.

The Israeli regime has continued its expansionist and illegal policies and practices with regard to Lebanon and in the occupied Syrian Golan too. As indicated in the Secretary-General's reports, the air and land violation of Lebanon by the Israeli regime has continued unabated in clear violation of resolution 1701 (2006). Still, innocent Lebanese are losing their lives because of the unexploded cluster munitions used by the Israeli regime in its aggression against Lebanon in 2006, and the landmines that its brutal army had planted during its occupation of south Lebanon continue to take human tolls.

In our view, a lasting peace in Palestine and the Middle East will only be possible through justice, full restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people, an end to discrimination, an end to occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories, the return of all Palestinian refugees, and a democratic mechanism through which all inhabitants of Palestine as well as Palestinians driven out of their homeland would have the possibility to determine their future in a democratic and peaceful fashion.

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General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 11
Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 24 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, I have the honour to enclose herewith the statement by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the imposition of unilateral sanctions against the Republic of Belarus, adopted on Thursday, 20 March 2008 (see annex).

Furthermore, I request that the above-mentioned document be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 11, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations
Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement

08-28366 (E) 270308

Annex to the letter dated 24 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the imposition of unilateral sanctions against the Republic of Belarus

20 March 2008

The Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement recalls the Final Document of the fourteenth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, in which the solidarity among Non-Aligned Movement countries was explicitly reiterated with regard to unilateral economic sanctions in paragraph 16.4, where the Heads of State or Government agreed to refrain from recognizing, adopting or implementing extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws, including unilateral economic sanctions, other intimidating measures, and arbitrary travel restrictions, that seek to exert pressure on non-aligned countries — threatening their sovereignty and independence, and their freedom of trade and investment — and prevent them from exercising their right to decide, by their own free will, their own political, economic and social systems, where they constitute flagrant violations of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, the multilateral trading system as well as the norms and principles governing friendly relations among States.

In this context the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement expresses its grave concern over the decision announced by a United Nations Member State to impose economic sanctions against the Republic of Belarus, a State member of the Movement.

The Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty (resolution 2131 (XX)), the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (resolution 2625 (XXV)), and the resolution on unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries (62/183).

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates the need to eliminate the unilateral application of economic and trade measures by one State against another that affect the free flow of international trade. The Movement urges States that have applied and continue to apply such laws and measures to refrain from promulgating and applying them in conformity with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

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Letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward a letter addressed to you by President Isaias Afwerki, dated 25 March 2008, regarding the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be most grateful if the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Araya **Desta**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

08-28360 (E) 280308

Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Allow me to emphasize at the outset that we shall continue to bring to your attention core legal issues that warrant appropriate response. We shall continue to do so in spite of our deep disappointment in the past months where our repeated pleas seem to be routinely ignored while unjustified efforts are exerted to get us bogged down with tangential issues.

The Algiers Agreement and its fundamental tenets cannot be diluted, nullified or forgotten even with the passage of time.

Indeed, as you are aware, the "final and binding" decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, which was determined almost six years ago now, is duly deposited in the files of the United Nations.

When the United Nations and its Security Council failed to shoulder their responsibilities causing the implementation of the decision to be delayed for too long, the Commission completed its task by implementing the demarcation of its "final and binding" award through a methodology that does not leave any loopholes. In the event, any explicit or implicit endeavour to question or dilute the "validity" of the award and the demarcation effected accordingly would be tantamount to circumventing legality and the rule of law.

As it happens, the boundary between Eritrea and Ethiopia has not only been delimited but it has also been demarcated without ambiguity. Whether pillars are placed along the border or not is in fact immaterial for all legal and practical purposes. It is indeed doubtful whether there is a single case in the African continent where the boundary has been delimited and demarcated with as much clarity and precision as the boundary between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

The critical question thus remains: how can the United Nations and the Security Council shun their responsibilities when the Ethiopian regime continues to occupy sovereign Eritrean territories in gross violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and in a situation where the border has been duly and clearly demarcated? Indeed, the first and foremost responsibilities and obligations of the United Nations and the Security Council can be no other than ensuring the evacuation of Ethiopian occupation from sovereign Eritrean territories.

To evade these fundamental issues or to indulge in other tangential matters can only be interpreted as, and will only lead to, a "legitimization" of invasion and occupation.

As you will agree, the Government of Eritrea cannot possibly accept, under any conditions, arrangements that will end up "legitimizing" the occupation of its sovereign land. No country, no international organization or power, can resort to unlawful practices that ultimately "legitimize" occupation in breach of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Against the backdrop of these realities, seemingly benign considerations advanced to "implement the decision of the Boundary Commission and to put pillars on the ground" are really designed to entangle the finished case in an intractable web of problems. The boundary has been delimited and demarcated.

In this context, the continuous provocations by Ethiopia and its supporters to foment and escalate "tension in the border" are transparent indeed. Their main desire is to deflect attention from the cardinal issue and to embroil the Security Council in tasks that are neither necessary nor justified. The United Nations cannot fall into the trap and embark on another unwarranted task while abandoning its primary obligations.

The other perplexing phenomenon is the attempt to manipulate and distort facts regarding the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in order both to divert attention from the critical issue and to portray Eritrea as the guilty party.

To request "Eritrea's views on the future role" of UNMEE is again tantamount to nudging us to abandon the cardinal issue and to accept and legitimize the occupation of our land. In the event, I would hope that you and the Security Council will not expect us to accept arrangements that contravene legality.

We have no appetite for, and we do not wish to dwell any longer, on minor matters such as "fuel supplies to UNMEE, or its equipment and properties". We harbour no wish whatsoever to retain any of the equipment of UNMEE. And when informed fully and clearly on the operational details regarding the evacuation of UNMEE, it will not be difficult for us to put in place what we deem are appropriate measures towards its smooth implementation.

In any case, I wish to underline that we shall not compromise our legal stance and approach irrespective of the negative and unconstructive campaigns that have been and may continue to be directed against us by misconstruing these tangential issues.

I urge you once again to ensure the evacuation of the Ethiopian occupation from our sovereign territories for the sake of the respect of international law and the Charter of the United Nations; for the sake of peace and the good-neighbourly ties of the peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia; and for the sake of the peace and stability of our region.

(*Signed*) Isaias Afwerki

United Nations S/2008/201

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 March 2008

Original: English

Letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

It gives me great pleasure to transmit herewith the Yemen initiative relevant to the resumption of dialogue between Fatah and Hamas (see annex).

The representatives of the two Palestinian movements also signed the Sana'a Declaration (see annex) on 23 March 2008, agreeing thereby to restart negotiation between the two movements on the basis of the elements contained in the Yemen initiative, and for the purpose of restoring the status quo ante, i.e., the situation that existed prior to the Gaza developments.

I would appreciate the circulation of the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdullah M. **Alsaidi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

08-28378 (E) 270308 270308

Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

The Yemeni initiative on the resumption of dialogue between Fatah and Hamas

I. Restoration of the status quo ante of 13 June 2007 in Gaza, adherence by the Palestine Liberation Organization to its commitments and the holding of early presidential and parliamentary elections;

II. The resumption of dialogue shall be founded on the Cairo Agreement of 2005 and the Mecca Agreement of 2007 and on the basis that the Palestinian people are an indivisible whole; that the Palestinian Authority is composed of an elected President and Parliament and of an executive authority in the form a Government of national unity; and on a commitment to Palestinian legitimacy in all its elements;

III. The affirmation by all parties of respect for and commitment to the Palestinian Constitution and law;

IV. Reconstitution of the security services on a national basis, such that they are loyal to the supreme authority and the Government of national unity and that they have no relation to any faction;

V. Formation of a coalition Government of national unity, in which all factions are represented in accordance with the number of seats each holds in Parliament, and which is fully capable of undertaking its responsibilities;

VI. Formation by the League of Arab States of a committee composed of relevant States, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan, whose task shall be to implement the foregoing points. For its part, Yemen expresses its readiness to participate in the said committee, should it be asked to do so;

VII. Palestinian institutions shall include all factions without distinction and be under the control of the supreme authority and of the Government of national unity.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

The Sana'a Declaration

We, the representatives of the Fatah and Hamas movements, hereby approve the Yemeni initiative as a framework for the resumption of dialogue between the movements, in order to restore the status quo ante to the situation existing prior to the events in Gaza, and in affirmation of the unity of the territory and the people of the Palestinian homeland and of a single authority.

(*Signed*) Azzam al-Ahmad
Representative of the Fatah movement

(*Signed*) Musa Abu Marzuq
Representative of the Hamas movement

Sana'a on 15 Rabi' I A.H. 1429,
corresponding to 23 March A.D. 2007

United Nations S/2008/201*

Security Council

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31 March 2008

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Letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

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The representatives of the two Palestinian movements also signed the Sana'a Declaration (see annex) on 23 March 2008, agreeing thereby to restart negotiation between the two movements on the basis of the elements contained in the Yemen initiative, and for the purpose of restoring the status quo ante, i.e., the situation that existed prior to the Gaza developments.

I would appreciate the circulation of the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdullah M. Alsaidi
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* Reissued for technical reasons.

08-28378* (E) 010408

Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

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Representative of the Fatah movement

(*Signed*) Musa Abu Marzuq
Representative of the Hamas movement

Sana'a on 15 Rabi' I A.H. 1429,
corresponding to 23 March A.D. 2008

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Security Council

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26 March 2008

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1780 (2007), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) until 15 October 2008, and requested me to report on its implementation semi-annually and not later than 45 days prior to its expiration. The present report covers major developments since my report of 22 August 2007 (S/2007/503) and the progress made in the implementation of the mandate of the Mission as set out in Security Council resolutions 1542 (2004), 1608 (2005), 1702 (2006), 1743 (2007) and 1780 (2007), and contains initial reflections on the development of a consolidation plan.

II. Political developments

2. The Government of Haiti has continued its efforts to reach out to political groups and to strengthen State institutions. However, the political situation remains fragile given the continued political divisions and weak State institutions, as well as the absence of any significant improvement in the difficult living conditions of much of the population. Many Haitians have experienced additional hardship associated with a recent increase in the price of a number of commodities and staple products. Further tensions have been generated by the public perception of a deterioration in security conditions, including a rise in the number of kidnappings since last December. Those pressures could be compounded by political manoeuvring as the election campaign for the renewal of one third of the Senate approaches.

3. Despite some significant achievements, differences between branches of Government at times threatened to undermine the level of collaboration necessary to permit effective governance. The branches of Government worked together to enact critical judicial reform legislation. Other important developments involving collaboration included agreement on a new Provisional Electoral Council and the 14 January consensus compromise allowing the 10 senators whose terms expire this year to remain in office until the adoption of a new electoral law. Early in 2008, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate elected new bureaux, which have expressed the intention of enhancing cooperation between the two chambers.

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4. President Préval continued to emphasize the need to move forward with reform of rule-of-law institutions and to pursue efforts to combat corruption and impunity. In his address at the opening of the forty-eighth parliamentary session, on 14 January 2008, the President stressed that the country should not expect a quick solution to its problems, but that the Haitian people should be creative and retain the will to rebuild the country. The President's call, in the same speech, for a partnership between the public and private sectors was well received, although it has not yet led to specific initiatives. While the President's call for constitutional reform, his queries regarding the need for an army and his statements on the high cost of living have generated some criticism, they have also generated momentum for broad reflection on these issues by political leaders, the private sector and civil society.

5. Internal tensions between the Government and Parliament culminated in the Prime Minister being summoned to appear before the Chamber of Deputies on 28 February. During a 10-hour debate, the Prime Minister and Cabinet members responded to a variety of questions, mostly on the high cost of living, but also on security, justice reform and the development of the country's agriculture. Ultimately, only the 8 deputies who had initiated the procedure voted to censure the Government, whereas 63 voted against and 13 abstained. While that outcome represented an overall endorsement of the Government's approach, the very fact that the Prime Minister was summoned underlined the fragility of the political collaboration and the degree to which it is affected by public frustration. Political dynamics in Haiti also have been strained by the ongoing investigation by an ad hoc Senate commission of allegations of dual nationality against senior officials, as dual nationality is forbidden by the Constitution. In addition, a number of public exchanges and media reports have suggested that tensions continue to exist between the judicial system and the Haitian National Police.

6. Expert-level collaboration between Haitian officials and their counterparts from the Dominican Republic continued, including exchanges of visits by senior officials in the area of the rule of law. Some tensions developed between communities along the border when the authorities of Haiti imposed a ban on the import of all poultry products from the Dominican Republic following reports of avian flu in that country in December 2007. The ban has resulted in shortages of poultry products in Haiti and has led to demonstrations by Haitian and Dominican suppliers. That episode highlighted the importance of ongoing efforts to develop working-level cooperation in the area of border management and regional relations.

7. On 4 September 2007, the ministers of defence of nine Latin American troop-contributing countries held a meeting in Port-au-Prince at which they underlined their commitment to supporting the stabilization process in Haiti. The meeting was an example of the regional solidarity that is crucial for the long-term sustainability of that effort. On 6 March 2008, during the Rio Group summit, held in the Dominican Republic, Haiti was officially admitted as a member of the Group, marking a further step forward in the country's integration into regional structures.

Elections

8. Following extensive consultations with political parties and civil society, President Préval appointed the members of a new Provisional Electoral Council on

11 December 2007. A new Director General of the Council was appointed on 29 February 2008 to replace the former incumbent, who had resigned six weeks after taking office. The new Council has been mandated to organize the election of one third of the Senate, other elections to fill positions that may become vacant and indirect elections for local assemblies and councils once the necessary legal framework has been adopted. As its first task, on 18 February 2008 the Council submitted a draft electoral law to the Government that was subsequently sent to Parliament for consideration.

9. MINUSTAH is helping to plan the logistical and security aspects of the senatorial elections, for which the donor community has expressed its willingness to provide the necessary funding, mostly through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The ongoing updating of the voter rolls by the Haitian National Office of Identification, in collaboration with the Organization of American States, has thus far resulted in the registration of more than 450,000 new voters.

III. Institutional support and the strengthening of the State

10. The institutions of governance continued to suffer from a lack of qualified personnel, poor infrastructure and limited resources. The importance of those challenges has been recognized by President Préval, who has identified the modernization of the State as a main priority for the remainder of his tenure. In July 2007, the Government approved a State reform programme that sets out a vision for the reform of the State administration, provides a framework for the development of a decentralization policy and establishes implementation mechanisms. A recently established steering committee is in charge of reform of the administration, and resources have been allocated from the national budget. In addition to the assistance of the United Nations system, the generous support of the international community remains indispensable to meeting the challenges of this major reform effort.

11. MINUSTAH continues to provide expertise and technical assistance in support of key institutions. The Mission is working with the leadership of both parliamentary chambers to strengthen legislative capacity, with a focus on providing additional resources to specific committees, enhancing communication between the executive and legislative branches and enabling direct access to public sessions through live broadcasts.

12. MINUSTAH is helping the Ministry of Interior and Local Government, through the use of quick-impact projects, to enhance the capacity of municipal councils by providing technical expertise on budget management as well as on the renovation of 10 mayors' offices, under way since July 2007. In an effort to ensure accountability with respect to the use of public funds provided to the municipal councils, the Ministry issued instructions requiring the clearing of old accounts before the disbursement of new allocations and engaged in extensive consultations with relevant actors in all departments to ensure respect for financial procedures. Meanwhile, MINUSTAH hosted various public forums throughout the country in late 2007 to facilitate debate on issues of governance and corruption.

13. MINUSTAH has also assisted efforts by the authorities of Haiti to strengthen border management. The Haitian Presidential Commission on Border Development has hosted four monthly meetings since October 2007 in which the Mission and

other international partners participated. The aim is to establish a coordination council, chaired by the Prime Minister, to support the development of a comprehensive approach to border management whereby the State presence along the border would be reinforced and issues related to immigration, customs and security would be addressed. The Government has designated the President of the Commission as the interim focal point for border management. Officials of the Government of the Dominican Republic have also expressed support for the efforts of MINUSTAH to assist the authorities of Haiti in enhancing border security and promoting the coordination of activities, as appropriate, at all levels.

14. The presence of the Government at the land border and key ports falls far short of what is required in terms of infrastructure, staffing and equipment. With regard to a national maritime presence, only the bases in Port-au-Prince and Cap Haïtien have basic capabilities, and donor support has been pledged to assist the Government in establishing a further base in Les Cayes. The MINUSTAH presence in the area, as described below, can in the short term assist in providing security and some logistical support. However, sustained and coordinated bilateral assistance will be indispensable to enable the State to reach a sufficient level of capability in the areas of customs, immigration and border protection.

IV. Security situation

15. The security situation has improved significantly since the major operations undertaken against gangs in early 2007, but the potential for volatility remains. Since December, several areas of Port-au-Prince have experienced an increase in criminality and in the number of reported kidnappings. The average number of reported kidnappings per month for the period from December 2007 to February 2008 reached 28, up from 11 six months earlier. There are also recurrent indications that gangs may be trying to reorganize themselves.

16. Anti-Government demonstrations have increased, with a particular focus on the rising cost of living. MINUSTAH recorded 164 such demonstrations in the six months leading up to August 2007 and 258 in the subsequent six months. Some of those protests appear to have been organized by political groups, and, while they have been limited in scale to date, they have occurred in a number of areas of the country. There is a risk that those who perceive their interests to be threatened by ongoing reform processes may deliberately seek to foster additional disturbances, including through orchestrated acts of violence. In the regions outside of the capital, the security situation remains generally calm, but occurrences of unrest and popular justice have been reported. Suspected illicit trafficking activities along the coast and by air have the potential to contribute to instability, as do uncontrolled movements of goods and persons across the land border. Misunderstandings between local communities in the border region have shown a tendency to escalate in the absence of State authority.

17. As the strength of the Haitian National Police increases and its professionalism improves, it is gradually becoming more effective in apprehending criminals and several cases of drug shipment seizure by the National Police have been reported. However, the total number of police officers remains well below the minimum required for a country the size of Haiti, and the service has limited resources and

lacks in-depth training. Thus, the active engagement of the MINUSTAH military and police remains indispensable.

18. The Mission continues to provide operational support to the Haitian National Police with military patrols throughout the country and through the activities of its formed police in the key urban areas of Port-au-Prince, Gonaïves and Cap Haïtien. In order to respond to threats in and around Port-au-Prince and to maintain momentum in the combat against criminal activities, MINUSTAH has been working closely with national authorities to adapt its security profile through a combination of mobile and fixed checkpoints, more assertive patrols, targeted operations and a greater presence of officers on foot. MINUSTAH also provides targeted assistance to the efforts of the National Police to respond to major crimes and kidnapping incidents, while securing strategic locations such as the national penitentiary.

19. The Mission deployed military and police personnel to four land border crossings in December. Those efforts will be further supported through the deployment of a formed police unit to Hinche. The second phase of the operation will involve the deployment of MINUSTAH forces in the vicinity of priority ports, selected jointly with the Government. Security is currently being enhanced in those areas through a patrolling presence on land and will be further strengthened by the deployment of a complementary maritime presence. Those efforts are intended primarily to promote security and help extend State authority. It is expected that they will also lead to increased revenue collection by the State. In addition, they should help deter illegal trafficking activities, particularly those related to weapons and narcotics, which have implications for the country's stability. The engagement of other countries in the region, including through the provision of information and complementary patrolling activities, will remain indispensable to the effectiveness of those efforts.

Community violence reduction

20. MINUSTAH continued to pursue its revised community violence reduction programme, which focuses on institutional support, labour-intensive projects and small arms control.

21. Logistical, financial and technical support was provided to the National Commission for Disarmament, Dismantlement and Reintegration in order to reinforce its capacity. The strategic approach adopted by the Government is one of urban development on the basis of a participative process. The Mission will support the efforts of the Government to establish community forums in nine priority areas identified by the Government as requiring immediate attention. Such forums will benefit from a special coordination office established by the Government to fast-track projects within targeted communities.

22. MINUSTAH is also seeking to stabilize vulnerable communities by focusing on the creation of short-term employment, which can facilitate the reintegration of former armed elements. On 1 March, MINUSTAH launched six labour-intensive projects in violence-affected communities. The projects employ 7,572 individuals, including 214 formerly armed individuals and a further seven projects will be launched in the coming weeks. All of the projects were identified jointly with the local authorities. MINUSTAH is also supporting the National Prison Administration

in the implementation of a pilot four-month pre-release reinsertion programme for 200 individuals who are scheduled to be released soon.

23. In addition, MINUSTAH and UNDP are assisting the Government in the revision of current legislation on the import and possession of arms and in the implementation of a weapons registry system. MINUSTAH is also supporting the Haitian National Police in the reform of its weapon registration unit and in a new registration programme for about 6,100 weapons that began in February. MINUSTAH carried out a social mobilization and sensitization campaign aimed at the promotion of a culture of non-violence that targeted some 100,000 citizens in vulnerable communities.

V. Reform of rule-of-law structures

24. The reform of rule-of-law structures is crucial to the consolidation of the stability of Haiti. The passage into law of a framework for judicial independence represented a significant step forward, complementing the earlier adoption of reform plans for the police, judiciary and corrections sectors. It is essential that the plans be translated into action and that the necessary national and international funding be made available to support those reform processes. In accordance with efforts by MINUSTAH to support the synchronized development of all rule-of-law institutions, UNDP, in consultation with the Government, is working towards the establishment of a joint rule-of-law trust fund, which could facilitate the mobilization and coordination of international aid. In all these areas, bilateral support and assistance remains indispensable.

25. While these longer-term reform processes are taking effect, the Government is seeking to strengthen the penal chain through targeted assistance in processing high-priority cases so as to limit the risk that those arrested for serious crimes will never be charged or brought before a court, owing to a failure to collect evidence, follow proper procedures or adequately document cases. President Préval has requested the assistance of MINUSTAH in ensuring the effective judicial review of such high-priority cases related to kidnapping and organized crime.

Strengthening the security capacity of Haiti

26. Further progress was made during the reporting period in strengthening the Haitian National Police. However, much remains to be done to reach the total of 14,000 officers that was identified in the Haitian National Police reform plan as necessary for basic policing duties. Further efforts will be required to achieve the complement of 18,000 to 20,000 uniformed officers needed to undertake the full range of security-related tasks, including duties related to the coastguard, border control, fire brigades and the penal system.

27. Approximately 8,444 officers are now serving within the Haitian National Police; however, some 1,000 of them are dedicated wholly or in part to other functions such as firefighting (144), coastguard (69) and corrections (790). Among the 7,441 officers who are assuming purely policing duties, 627 who graduated early in November 2007 as the nineteenth class of the Police Academy have been assigned to Port-au-Prince's new Mobile Intervention Brigade. Selection for the

twentieth class of police recruits is currently ongoing. For officers who are already serving, MINUSTAH monitoring and mentoring, including field training, has helped to reinforce core values and bring skill levels up to the same standards as those of Academy graduates.

28. As part of the vetting process, a total of 3,588 files have been or are under review in five departments by joint Haitian National Police-MINUSTAH teams; the majority of those concern recruits of previous classes of the Police Academy. Sixty-one recruits have been dismissed to date as a result of their background checks. In total, 223 closed files are ready to be handed over to the Haitian authorities; the rest remain under review.

29. The Mission continues to work closely with the national authorities, UNDP and donors in developing the institutional capacity of the Haitian National Police, including through the engagement of MINUSTAH police officers in training, curriculum development, monitoring and mentoring. In order to contribute effectively, the Mission is seeking to reinforce its police component with personnel having specialized skills in such areas as forensic investigation, border management, administration and logistics.

30. At the request of President Préval, MINUSTAH is prioritizing efforts to strengthen the capacity of the judicial police of Haiti, which has a key role to play in the fight against impunity and major crimes. MINUSTAH is helping the authorities of Haiti in the development of a reform package that would include action plans for competency and performance evaluations, staffing, the reallocation of office space, equipment, technological improvements, and technical and ethical training. The laboratory capacity of the Haitian National Police will be increased in the coming months with the installation of systems for fingerprinting and ballistics.

31. MINUSTAH continues to mainstream gender issues in the Haitian National Police through the development of educational material for the Police Academy and training jointly with National Police gender focal points. A registration exercise aimed at encouraging women to join the police force resulted in thousands of women applying for some 150 places in the twentieth class; 710 women passed the entrance examination. Currently, 6 per cent of Haitian National Police officers undertaking policing duties are women.

32. Some $25 million in bilateral support has been pledged or contributed to date in support of the police reform plan, aimed at, inter alia, the establishment of a new General Inspectorate headquarters, the refurbishment of police stations in the south and west departments, the construction of a maritime base in Les Cayes, the provision of equipment for regular operations, and the expansion of the Police Academy in order to permit two basic training courses, each with 750 recruits, to take place simultaneously. The latter project would make a significant contribution towards reaching the target, noted above, of 14,000 officers. Funding for quick-impact projects has been critical in some of the urgent infrastructure rehabilitation projects.

33. Meanwhile, a Presidential Commission was established in October 2007 to undertake a process of reflection on the reinforcement of public security in Haiti. In its first report, issued in January, the Commission discussed the definition of a defence policy and national security. It will continue its consultations with national and international actors prior to submitting its final recommendations.

Judicial system

34. A significant step forward was taken in the judicial reform process with the adoption of three key laws, promulgated on 20 December, regarding the independence of the judiciary, the establishment of the Superior Council for the Judiciary and of the School for Magistrates, and the status of Magistrates. Those laws constitute a cornerstone for judicial reform as they provide for supervisory and disciplinary measures, including a certification process and a judicial inspectorate, judicial career management, a single initial training for magistrates and an adjustment of wages and working conditions of magistrates. The follow-up committee on judicial reform (see S/2007/503, para. 39), which continues to play an important role in steering and promoting the reform process, facilitated the necessary consensus in Parliament. MINUSTAH and UNDP are currently seeking to coordinate the activities of donor countries to support the implementation of those laws.

35. In the framework of its national growth and poverty reduction strategy paper, the Government of Haiti has adopted a three-year justice reform plan in line with the five pillars that were defined following broad consultations with local and international actors: the reorganization and modernization of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security; the strengthening of the judiciary; improved access to justice and efficiency of the courts; the rehabilitation and development of corrections facilities; and the modernization of key legislation. Special focus is needed on the reorganization of and capacity-building for the Ministry, the establishment of the Superior Council for the Judiciary and the reopening of the School for Magistrates.

36. MINUSTAH is providing technical support and advice to the Ministry of Justice and Public Security and the School for Magistrates in preparation for the school's opening. The Mission has also trained 150 justices of the peace on the implementation of internal rules and regulations, 60 prosecutors and police officers in summary trial procedure and 200 judges, police officers and medical personnel on forensic investigations. MINUSTAH has continued to hold daily meetings with judicial actors throughout the country so as to enhance coordination between the judiciary and the police while monitoring both criminal court sessions and sensitive cases. MINUSTAH also provides advice and technical assistance on a day-to-day basis to the Ministry and judicial actors and helps to coordinate international engagement to ensure a common approach to judicial reform.

37. The Mission has continued its efforts to work with the authorities of Haiti, donors and other stakeholders to promote the availability of legal assistance to those in need. A first step was taken with the establishment of a legal aid office in Cité Soleil on 11 January 2008. It is foreseen that five additional offices will be opened throughout the country.

38. The new laws and the three-year justice reform plan include key targets and associated timelines. The sensitivity of these issues and the time required for consultation may make it difficult to adhere to a specific timeline. For example, it is anticipated that the installation of the Superior Council of the Judiciary could take up to six months. Continued prioritization of this process by the authorities of Haiti will be essential in order to maintain momentum.

Corrections system

39. With the adoption of the strategic plan on the National Prison Administration, the authorities of Haiti have outlined a process for the reform of the country's correctional system. However, the current security and human rights situation in the country's prisons remains difficult and requires urgent attention. As at 31 January 2008, more than 6,600 detainees were being held in 17 prisons in an area that, according to international standards, should not accommodate more than 1,088 inmates. The National Penitentiary in Port-au-Prince currently houses 3,239 inmates in accommodations that would be appropriate for no more than 438.

40. Nationwide, 82.75 per cent of prisoners remain in pretrial detention. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security has taken steps to address that issue through the work of the Consultative Commission on Prolonged Pretrial Detention and by reducing the average time spent in police custody and increasing the number of court hearings. The work of the Commission itself, whose mandate has been extended to all jurisdictions of the country for an additional six months, has thus far resulted in the release of approximately 550 pretrial detainees — 10 per cent of the total. That, however, has failed to offset the steady flow of new detainees or compensate for the lack of prosecutions. In addition, the Commission's decisions have generated some controversy, and questions have been raised concerning their security implications, their consistency and the rationale behind them. Overall, more systematic efforts are required if the number of persons in pretrial detention is to be significantly reduced.

41. MINUSTAH has continued to provide assistance in maintaining security in prison facilities and in undertaking immediate measures to respond to urgent needs, while supporting longer-term reform. The Mission, together with UNDP, is providing advice in the areas of training, infrastructure, case management, health, policy and day-to-day operations. MINUSTAH has also supported the increased cooperation on prisons between the authorities of Haiti and of the Dominican Republic, who have exchanged visits and have agreed to extend their collaboration, mainly in the area of training.

VI. Human rights

42. The improvements observed in the human rights situation during the last reporting period have been maintained, with fewer cases of arbitrary arrest, greater respect for legal deadlines related to police custody and a decline from previous years in the number of allegations of torture and ill-treatment. However, the tenuous nature of those improvements suggests the need to accelerate the ongoing institutional reforms, which are based on universal human rights principles. Moreover, while sustainable in-depth reforms in the field of rule of law and institution-building will inevitably take time, additional concrete and symbolic results are needed in the short term in order to strengthen public confidence.

43. During the reporting period, MINUSTAH forwarded to the authorities of Haiti information regarding four cases in which individuals were allegedly killed by Haitian National Police officers. The Haitian National Police General Inspectorate continued to step up its efforts to promote the fight against impunity and the accountability of the National Police. MINUSTAH maintained its close

collaboration with the General Inspectorate and the Port-au-Prince Prosecutor's Office with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

44. The growing number of lynching cases remains a serious concern. From August 2007 to January 2008, 66 incidents were reported that resulted in the deaths of 30 individuals and injuries to 45 others. Eighteen cases were reported during January alone. Although the Haitian National Police has intervened recently in a more decisive manner, few lynching cases have been formally investigated.

45. MINUSTAH has continued to support the adoption of enabling legislation on the Office of the Ombudsman, in conformity with the Paris Principles on national human rights institutions, and worked to improve the Office's visibility through joint programming. While the Office has established some small regional offices, its functioning is hindered by lack of financial support and an inadequate legislative framework.

46. During the reporting period, MINUSTAH organized training for police officers, magistrates and national human rights non-governmental organizations on human rights, law enforcement and due-process standards. In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, a workshop on reporting to international treaty monitoring bodies was conducted for ministry representatives in advance of the establishment of an inter-ministerial commission in charge of preparing the country's second periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Gender

47. In collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Rights and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, MINUSTAH hosted in February a visit by a high-level delegation and supported the validation process of the Government's initial report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Mission also worked with the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to support the National Plan of Action to Combat Violence against Women. According to national findings, domestic physical violence appears to be the most commonly reported type of violence against women, followed by sexual violence. There appears to be an increase in the number of documented cases of physical and sexual violence against women and minors and a decrease in the number of reported gang rapes compared with the period from 2004 to 2006. It seems that improved security, improved access to assistance and public information campaigns may be motivating more victims of sexual violence to seek help.

48. During the reporting period, MINUSTAH, together with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and local non-governmental organizations, established a Gender Working Group on the Promotion of Women's Political Rights for the upcoming senatorial elections and beyond. It has also continued to provide leadership training for women involved in politics at all levels.

Child protection

49. The improved security situation has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of children affected by armed violence. However, several areas of concern remain, including the kidnapping and trafficking of children and the rape of girls. The number of minors held in prolonged pretrial detention increased to 266 in February 2008 from 226 in July 2007, while the situation of children in institutional care centres continues to be a source of grave concern.

50. MINUSTAH, UNDP and UNICEF are continuing to work with the Ministries of Justice and Social Affairs to improve the administration of justice for children in detention and are supporting the efforts of the Government to strengthen the monitoring of institutional care centres. MINUSTAH and UNICEF provided training to Haitian National Police officers in four regions on child protection, and efforts are ongoing to ensure training in all commissariats. A monitoring and reporting mechanism has been developed within MINUSTAH, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1612 (2005). MINUSTAH, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), provided support to the national authorities in transporting 47 children so that they could be reunited with their families in Jérémie. The children, between the ages of 2 and 8 years, had been victims of trafficking and were found in Port-au-Prince in August 2007.

VII. Humanitarian, recovery and development activities

Socio-economic situation

51. The consolidation of stability in Haiti will require — in parallel to the peacekeeping efforts under way — some measurable advances with regard to socio-economic concerns. The close link between security and development was particularly evident in the context of the rising public discontent at the high cost of living.

52. The delivery of short-term palliatives and their effect on longer-term progress will depend primarily on collaborative efforts that draw on policy decisions and political will by the political leadership of Haiti, initiatives by the country's private sector and engagement by the United Nations country team, the international financial institutions and bilateral donors; Haitians living abroad could also contribute. Prospects for the country's longer-term recovery depend on a continued commitment by the country's leadership to work together and to avoid any relapse into crisis, which could undermine investor confidence.

53. In macroeconomic terms, Haiti has continued to make progress in stabilizing the economy under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility programme. In 2007, real growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have risen to 3.2 per cent, bringing it back to its 1991 level. Owing to population growth, per capita GDP, however, remains 23 per cent below its 1991 level and 38 per cent below its peak level, which was reached in 1980. The annual inflation rate declined to 7.6 per cent in August 2007, down from 24 per cent in August 2005, but has since increased, to 11 per cent in January 2008. The currency remained stable, and international reserves rose to $545 million.

54. The Government budget for 2007-2008 envisages a rise in expenditures, excluding foreign aid, by 0.6 per cent of GDP, with a focus on education, health, justice, public security, agriculture, infrastructure and tourism development. IMF estimates a continued GDP growth rate in 2008 of 4.3 per cent. Donors and the United Nations system continue to hold regular monthly meetings with the Prime Minister to ensure that Government expenditures and external aid are mutually reinforcing and adequately coordinated. Further support from the international community, as well as a renewed commitment to aid coordination and effectiveness, is indispensable in order to break structural and institutional bottlenecks and to help create an environment conducive to investment, which is essential for the country to capitalize on its potential in such sectors as tourism, manufacturing and agriculture.

55. In November 2007, following extensive consultations supported by UNDP, the Government submitted its national growth and poverty reduction strategy paper to the World Bank and IMF. The paper outlines the development agenda of Haiti and its strategy for meeting the Millennium Development Goals and should form the basis for future assistance strategies. The Government intends to consolidate macroeconomic stability and strengthen conditions for sustainable economic recovery by improving the business climate, reinforcing the capacity of public administration, reforming economic governance and rehabilitating and developing the social and physical infrastructure. The Government has called for a high-level international conference, which is to be held in Port-au-Prince on 24 and 25 April 2008. It is hoped that the conference will facilitate agreement on a framework for financing and secure enhanced predictability and an increased level of budgetary support for the poverty reduction strategy paper. The conference will also provide an opportunity to reinforce donor coordination and discuss measures for increased aid effectiveness. Meanwhile, the United Nations country team, in collaboration with MINUSTAH, has begun to formulate the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2009 to 2011 in support of the Government strategy paper.

56. In parallel with macroeconomic development, it remains urgent to address the immediate hardship experienced by the Haitian population, 76 per cent of whom still live on less than $2 a day. Weak purchasing power remains a constant preoccupation in connection with basic daily items and imported goods, which represent some 60 per cent of available products on the market. Furthermore, the recent increase in the price of such staples as flour, rice and cooking oil has led to additional suffering, while access to basic social services (health care, education, potable water) remains extremely limited. According to the poverty reduction strategy paper, of 133 communes, only 2 provide adequate services, while 51 are described as very weak or extremely weak. The continued persistence of extreme poverty in rural areas is a major factor in the rapid growth of the urban population. As a result of those realities, Haiti ranked 146th of 177 States in the UNDP human development index for 2007/2008.

57. MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team have continued to promote, together with the Government, donors and the private sector, ways to promote the delivery of a "peace dividend" to the most vulnerable communities in Haiti. With donor support, the MINUSTAH military component completed a series of small-scale projects aimed at delivering a peace dividend to more than 25,000 people in those communities most affected by violence. In addition, a new multi-donor relief, recovery and reconciliation fund, managed by the Office for the Coordination of

Humanitarian Affairs, has been set up to provide rapid and flexible funding to address gaps in responses to natural disasters and for recovery and reconciliation activities. Donors are encouraged to contribute to the fund.

58. MINUSTAH is also pursuing, together with the World Bank, the provision of a grant to support infrastructure improvements that would facilitate operational activities and favour local economic development. It is estimated that in 2007, more than 80,000 person-months of employment were created through the implementation of activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IOM, UNDP and the World Food Programme (WFP). It will be crucial, in conjunction with plans by the Government to triple the size of its Communal Impact Programme so as to promote local job creation and allow local entrepreneurs to recapitalize their businesses, to expand job-intensive initiatives, in terms both of beneficiaries and of regions. The commitment by the Government to a national strategy for watershed management, which is supported by the United Nations country team, is an important step in that direction, as the strategy will promote environmental recuperation and significant job creation, often in vulnerable areas.

Humanitarian efforts

59. During the reporting period, several hurricanes and tropical weather systems severely affected Haiti. The heaviest damage was inflicted by Hurricanes Dean in August and Noël in October, which affected more than 40,000 families. MINUSTAH provided extensive support in the affected areas by carrying out mass evacuations, helicopter and land assessments and the distribution of relief assistance. The response of the Government to those emergencies was supported by the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and partner organizations. The delivery of assistance was facilitated by a grant from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund and funds from several donors. UNICEF supported the provision of hygiene kits and blankets and facilitated access to potable water; WFP distributed more than 130 tons of various food commodities; and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) facilitated access to medical care. Furthermore, IOM improved conditions in temporary shelters and assisted in recovery efforts, while FAO launched recovery projects for the distribution of seeds and other agricultural resources to the most affected areas. Significant damage to crops resulted in greater vulnerability in terms of food security in parts of the country. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is conducting a baseline survey to improve joint needs assessments following natural disasters while enhancing preparedness and strengthening humanitarian coordination and response mechanisms.

60. On 5 November 2007, the Government launched a mass immunization campaign throughout the country, drawing on support from PAHO/WHO, UNICEF and MINUSTAH, which played a critical role in ensuring the necessary security and logistical support. To date, 397,315 children under the age of 5 have been vaccinated with polio vaccine; 1,848,200 aged 1 to 19 years with measles and rubella vaccine; and 123,216 women of reproductive age with diphtheria and tetanus vaccine. A total of 624,406 schoolchildren in five departments have received deworming treatment. In January 2008, the Government, with the cooperation of UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, bilateral donors and international financial institutions, adopted an implementation

plan for the national Education for All strategy. As part of its programmes targeting pregnant women and malnourished children, WFP distributed more than 15,000 tons of direct food assistance to more than 670,000 beneficiaries. The Mission continued to support the platform of people living with HIV/AIDS and, together with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, has developed a communications training programme for persons with HIV. Two sessions on the issue of HIV, aimed at identifying capacities to reinforce the response on the basis of the HIV multisectoral national strategic plan 2008-2012, were conducted at the nine MINUSTAH multimedia centres, with the participation of the Ministry of Health and local organizations. The United Nations Office for Project Services continued to support the operational management of the nine multimedia centres, which promote dialogue with civil society and the local media and authorities.

VIII. Personnel conduct and discipline

61. MINUSTAH continued to implement the approved strategy of prevention, enforcement and victim assistance to address the problem of sexual abuse and exploitation. During the period under review, training was provided directly to 3,070 Mission personnel — 1,486 military personnel, 793 police officers, and 791 national and international civilian staff. The Mission received 10 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation, which were sent to the Office of Internal Oversight Services for investigation. A total of 123 military personnel and 1 police officer from seven countries were repatriated on disciplinary grounds.

62. That total includes a group of 111 Sri Lankan troops who were repatriated at the beginning of November 2007, with the cooperation of the authorities of Sri Lanka, following allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. National judicial proceedings are now under way, drawing on the findings of investigators from the Office and from Sri Lanka who were deployed to Haiti.

IX. Preparation of a consolidation plan

63. Significant progress has been made towards the stabilization of Haiti in a relatively short period of time. However, those achievements remain fragile and could swiftly unravel if they are not consolidated through further sustained and coordinated efforts in priority areas. While the primary responsibility for achieving stability lies with the Haitians themselves, MINUSTAH, together with the wider international community, has an essential contribution to make.

64. In that context, MINUSTAH has launched a process of consultations with the authorities of Haiti to identify key benchmarks by which consolidation of the emerging stability can be measured, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1780 (2007). As reflected in the present report, those initial discussions suggest that critical milestones could include:

(a) Continued progress in the resolution of political differences through dialogue and the successful completion of a cycle of elections that culminates in the smooth installation of a democratically chosen President and legislature in 2011;

(b) The establishment of a sustainable security structure that would enable Haiti to respond effectively to potential threats within the country and along its land

and maritime borders while respecting international standards and individual freedoms. This would include the creation of a basic policing capacity of 14,000 officers, envisaged to be in place by 2011, and the establishment of related institutional structures, as stipulated by the Haitian National Police reform plan, together with adequate arrangements for border security;

(c) The establishment of an independent and credible judicial and penal system that respects and upholds human rights and is accessible to all citizens. Within the area of the justice system, key measurements of progress could include the establishment of the Superior Council of the Judiciary and progress in the implementation of a certification process. It would also include the opening of the School for Magistrates and progress in the training of a critical mass of magistrates, prosecutors and other judicial actors. The completion of investigations and trials in connection with a number of high-profile cases involving corruption and organized crime could also make a key difference in strengthening public confidence in the justice system. Within the penal system, it is vital to undertake, in accordance with the reform plan, the infrastructural improvements required to prevent the gross abuse of the human rights of those subject to incarceration and to facilitate the reinsertion of those who have been released;

(d) The extension of State authority throughout the country through the establishment of legitimate, transparent and accountable democratic State institutions, down to the local level, with the capacity to collect and disburse funds for the benefit of the population, including the establishment of a viable system of border management.

In addition to the achievement of the goals with regard to which MINUSTAH has mandated responsibilities, lasting stability will require a tangible improvement in the living standards of the population and the creation of conditions for economic recovery. Key indicators of progress could include the availability of basic services such as health care and education, together with an increase in State revenue, a significant rise in GDP (with prospects for sustained growth over several consecutive years), a rise in the employment rate and an increase in internal and foreign direct investment.

65. In my next report, on the basis of ongoing discussions between the Mission and the authorities of Haiti, I intend to provide additional details on these mutually reinforcing objectives, including further benchmarks by which progress can be measured.

66. Progress towards attaining such benchmarks would help to guide the future activities and configuration of the Mission as well as its coordination efforts with key partners. The achievement of some of the benchmarks may be beyond the capacity and mandate of the Mission alone. However, they will assist in identifying the conditions that are necessary for the authorities of Haiti to sustain stability, with the support of bilateral, regional and multilateral development actors, and in evaluating the country's progress towards a critical threshold of stability that would obviate the need for another peacekeeping operation.

X. Mission support

67. In addition to routine tasks, key Mission support activities have included the logistical facilitation of the military and police deployment at the four land border

crossings with the Dominican Republic. Reconnaissance trips for eight seaport border locations have been completed for the deployment of maritime assets when they become available.

68. During the reporting period, MINUSTAH continued to integrate HIV/AIDS awareness and training into the Mission's activities. A total of 3,575 personnel have now been sensitized through briefing sessions. MINUSTAH has continued to promote and maintain the availability of voluntary counselling and confidential testing at two permanent sites and through one mobile team. To date, more than 1,200 tests have been carried out.

69. Since August 2007, 3 MINUSTAH personnel have died, 23 have been medically evacuated to locations outside Haiti and 32 have been medically evacuated to higher-level care within Haiti. Mission personnel continue to confront serious security hazards.

XI. Financial aspects

70. By its resolution 61/284, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $535,372,800, equivalent to $44,614,400 per month, for the maintenance of MINUSTAH for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. The proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 has been submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration at the second part of its resumed sixty-second session.

71. As at 30 November 2007, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for MINUSTAH amounted to $418.8 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to $3,153.8 million.

72. As at 31 January 2008, amounts owed to troop and formed police contributors to MINUSTAH totalled $101.8 million. Reimbursement of troop costs has been made for the period up to 31 May 2007 and, for contingent-owned equipment, up to 31 March 2007, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

XII. Observations

73. Since my previous report, significant strides have been made in key areas, giving grounds for hope while also highlighting the need for continued efforts. Continued collaboration among the political leadership has permitted the adoption of a legal framework for the judiciary and agreement on the terms of Senators and on the establishment of the Provisional Electoral Council. Furthermore, with the contribution of the MINUSTAH military and police, the security situation has improved considerably in the past year. In cooperation with the authorities of Haiti, the Mission has adjusted its profile and operation so as to tackle criminal activity in the capital. The Mission also initiated its redeployment along the country's borders to reinforce the authority of the State. Significant, if incremental, progress has been made in the implementation of rule-of-law reform programmes, along with renewed efforts to strengthen other State institutions. Macroeconomic indicators have continued to improve, and the country has experienced economic growth at a level that had not been possible for decades.

74. However, the potential for regression remains apparent. Tensions between individual political actors and among branches of Government have distracted from the reform agenda. Together with an increase in the number of kidnappings and continued rumours concerning the recomposition of gangs, those events have tended to undermine public confidence. The institutional capacity of the country remained in precarious condition, hindering the implementation of rule of law and the delivery of basic public services and affecting the investment climate. Meanwhile, difficulties in translating a positive macroeconomic environment into tangible improvements in living conditions have not only imposed real hardship on the population, but also contributed to the risk of a relapse into instability. In the face of that challenge, the delivery of short-term economic palliatives could make a critical difference.

75. It is imperative that all those involved in the stabilization of Haiti redouble their efforts to enable the country to seize this historic opportunity to emerge from the destructive cycles of the past. Primary responsibility in this regard belongs to the leadership and institutions of Haiti, whose collaboration with one another is indispensable for continued progress. It is incumbent upon the executive and legislative branches of Government to persevere in jointly outlining strategies for the future and in their implementation. Likewise, to be effective, justice and law-enforcement institutions must cooperate and be seen to do so. Any perceptions of differences between them will inevitably weaken both. Such efforts must be buttressed by the private sector, whose initiative and resources are of critical importance, and by opinion-makers, who can help foster public engagement in what must be a broad endeavour to create a better future.

76. Strong international involvement remains indispensable for continued progress. The contribution of the MINUSTAH military and police remains crucial to the continued response to security threats and criminal activity and in forging a sense of security and supporting State authority along the border — an area in which the involvement of other countries in the region is also necessary in order for such efforts to be effective. The involvement of MINUSTAH in rule-of-law reform and in other key areas for stability remains central to the successful strengthening of State institutions. Institutional reform cannot succeed without extensive bilateral support. It is hoped that the establishment of a rule-of-law trust fund will provide a useful vehicle for channelling assistance in this area. The coordinated efforts of donors, together with those of the United Nations country team and the international financial institutions, are also vital to improve socio-economic conditions, which are inextricably linked to the achievement of stability.

77. The success of the stabilization process will require sustained efforts. The preparation of a consolidation plan with measurable benchmarks, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1780 (2007), could help to avert a premature disengagement, which, as has been seen elsewhere, can lead to a rapid reversal of all that has been achieved. As noted in the present report, MINUSTAH has initiated the preparation of such a plan, based on consultation with the authorities of Haiti. I look forward to providing further details of this plan, including the relevant benchmarks, in my next report to the Security Council.

78. I would like to conclude by expressing my sincere gratitude to my Special Representative, Hédi Annabi, and to the men and women of MINUSTAH, whose dedication and commitment to the stabilization of Haiti are making a crucial difference, as well as to those Governments that have provided troops and police to the operation.

Annex I

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: countries providing military staff and contingents (as at 26 March 2008)

	Staff officers		*Troops*		
Country	*Females*	*Males*	*Females*	*Males*	*Total*
Argentina	—	9	22	530	561
Bolivia	—	3	6	209	218
Brazil	—	14[a]	6	1 193[b]	1 213
Canada	—	4	—	—	4
Chile	—	6	6	487	499
Croatia	—	3	—	—	3
Ecuador	—	1	—	66	67
France	—	2	—	—	2
Guatemala	—	5	7	107	119
Jordan	—	10	—	750	760
Nepal	—	11	13	1 086	1 110
Pakistan	—	1	—	—	1
Paraguay	—	—	—	31	31
Peru	—	5	—	205	210
Philippines	—	2	11	144	157
Sri Lanka	—	10	—	950	960
United States of America	1	3	—	—	4
Uruguay	—	13	55	1 078	1 146
Total	**1**	**102**	**126**	**6 836**	**7 065**

[a] Including the Force Commander.
[b] Including one Bolivian officer serving with the Brazilian contingent.

Annex II

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: countries providing police officers and formed police units (as at 26 March 2008)

	Police officers		*Formed police units*		
Country	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
Australia	—	—	—	—	—
Argentina	—	4	—	—	4
Benin	—	61	—	—	61
Brazil	—	4	—	—	4
Burkina Faso	—	19	—	—	19
Cameroon	1	23	—	—	24
Canada	7	87	—	—	94
Central African Republic	—	1	—	—	1
Chad	—	1	—	—	1
Chile	1	13	—	—	14
China	—	9	8	117	134
Colombia	—	2	—	—	2
Côte d'Ivoire	3	34	—	—	37
Croatia	—	1	—	—	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	—	2	—	—	2
Egypt	—	29	—	—	29
El Salvador	—	3	—	—	3
France	4	53	—	—	57
Grenada	—	3	—	—	3
Guinea	4	84	—	—	88
Italy	—	5	—	—	5
Jordan	—	19	—	290	309
Madagascar	—	1	—	—	1
Mali	—	47	—	—	47
Nepal	2	23	7	118	150
Niger	1	65	—	—	66
Nigeria	—	6	38	87	131
Pakistan	—	—	—	250	250
Philippines	5	12	—	—	17
Romania	8	16	—	—	24
Russian Federation	—	4	—	—	4
Rwanda	—	11	—	—	11
Senegal	—	64	—	83	147
Serbia	1	4	—	—	5

Country	Police officers		Formed police units		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Spain	3	43	—	—	46
Sri Lanka	—	33	—	—	33
Togo	—	3	—	—	3
Turkey	2	58	—	—	60
Uruguay	—	4	—	—	4
United States of America	3	42	—	—	45
Yemen	—	1	—	—	1
Total	**45**	**894**	**53**	**945**	**1 937**

MINUSTAH
Deployment as of March 2008
Force Headquarters
Battalion boundary
International boundary
Departmental boundary
National capital
Departmental capital
Town, village
Main road
Secondary road
Airport
CUBA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
CARIBBEAN SEA
HAITI
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
NORD - OUEST
NORD
NORD - EST
ARTIBONITE
CENTRE
OUEST
SUD
GRANDE - ANSE
NIPPES
SUD - EST
Port-de-Paix
St. Louis du Nord
Cap-Haïtien
Fort-Liberté
Gonaïves
Saint-Marc
Hinche
Mirebalais
Port-au-Prince
Jacmel
Les Cayes
Jérémie
Anse-à-Foleur
Golfe de la Gonâve
Canal de la Tortue
Canal de Saint-Marc
Canal de la Gonâve
Presqu'île des Barradères
Presqu'île du Sud
Presqu'île de Jérémie
Presqu'île de Tiburon
Pointe-à-Raquette
Cap Rajmond
Baie de Jacmel
Baie de Port-au-Prince
Baie de Mancenille
Baie de Henne
Baie de Gonaïves
Baie de Port-de-Paix
Baie de Caracol
Baie de Fort-Liberté
Baie de Manzanille
Baie de Port-Salut
Baie de Tiburon
Baie de Miragoâne
Baie de Petite-Rivière
Baie de Grande-Saline
Baie de Port-Margot
Baie de Limbé
Baie de Terre-Neuve
Baie de Bombardopolis
Baie de Mancenille
Baie de Caracol
Baie de Fort-Liberté
Baie de Manzanille
Baie de Port-Salut
Baie de Tiburon
Baie de Miragoâne
Baie de Petite-Rivière
Baie de Grande-Saline
Baie de Port-Margot
Baie de Limbé
Baie de Terre-Neuve
Baie de Bombardopolis
Baie de Port-de-Paix
Baie de Gonaïves
Baie de Port-au-Prince
Baie de Jacmel